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"Tickle my scalp, red-skin, if you don't make purty free with another feller's shanty!"

## OLD SOLITARY, The Hermit Trapper; OR, THE DRAGON OF SILVER LAKE.

BY OLL COOMES,

Author of "Hawkeye Harry," "Boy Spy," "Ironsides, the Scout," "Death-Notch, the Destroyer," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### GREAT WOLF'S MISSION.

DESPITE the fears that had been so suddenly forced upon the mind of Old Solitary by the discovery he had made, he permitted no look, word or action to betray his emotions. He was satisfied, by the disdainful and insolent silence he maintained, that the savage was there with no good intentions; but, concealing his feelings of resentment upon the red-skin for the liberties he had taken with his cabin, the old trapper said: "Tickle my scalp, red-skin, if you don't make purty free with another feller's shanty."

"Ugh!" grunted the savage, as if somewhat exasperated at being disturbed, then resumed his smoking with sullen demeanor. "I say, red-skin," continued the old trapper, "you've got considerable cheek 'bout you to go into one's cabin, and make yerself at home. Who the dickens are you, ennyhow?"

The savage took the pipe from his mouth, and turning his head, gazed up at the trapper, as though he had just become cognizant of his presence.

"Who you?" he blurted out, in a contemptuous manner, speaking in bad English.

Old Solitary could scarcely suppress his emotions of resentment. He was sorely tempted to strike the insolent foe down,

but, not wishing to precipitate the crisis which seemed inevitable, he permitted his better judgment to decide his course, and to the savage's question he replied:

"I'm Old Solitary, you red tobaccy-sign. I'm chief of this shebang, and would like to know what you are doin' here, and who you are."

The savage drew his blanket close about his shoulders, arose to his feet and confronted the trapper.

He was a powerful Indian, fully as tall as the old trapper, with broad, massive shoulders, deep chest and long, muscular arms. He was, in every respect, the old trapper's equal so far as size and muscular development were concerned, and if age was taken into consideration, the Indian had the advantage, for he was in the very prime of life. His face was broad and sensual, and his features and low, retreating forehead portrayed a strong predominance of animality.

It was readily perceived that this Titan savage was possessed of a superabundance of self-conceit and arrogance. When he arose to confront Old Solitary, he drew himself up to his full height, and made such an ostentatious display of his powerful form as would of itself, as he believed, be sufficient to intimidate the pale-face trapper and command a more respectful recognition of his august proportions.

But, whatever his intentions and thoughts were upon this score, his sinister, serpent-

like gaze was met by the keen, bold eye of the trapper.

"I am Great Wolf," the savage said.

"Great Wolf, eh?" replied the trapper; "wal, I'm sure your havin' two legs, instead of four, doesn't hinder you from bein' as sneakin' as yer brothers with the four legs and bushy tail."

"Great Wolf has not come here to idle words with a squaw," the savage said, haughtily.

"So so!" exclaimed the trapper; "then you're my enemy, eh, Mister Mahogany?" "The Sioux have dug up the hatchet and taken the war-path. The pale-faces are growing bolder every day, because they are gaining strength, and will soon overrun our land, as they did the land of our forefathers."

The savage spoke English quite intelligibly, yet we prefer to render the substance of his conversation in our own words and language.

"Wal, Ingin," replied the old trapper, "I think you've undertaken a job that will cost you a few scalps. There's a right smart sprinklin' of the whites hereabouts, and thar's plenty of 'long-knives' or sojers, as we call 'em, within a day's ride of the lake. Now it strikes me under the scalp that you'd better trot home, tell yer folks to bury the hatchet ag'in, and mind their own business."

"Waugh!" ejaculated the savage; "the white Hermit talks as though he was a host.

He is but a single warrior, not equal even to Great Wolf."

"Oh, what a blost you are, Ingin! You're big, I'll admit, but you're like a tent when the wind swells it up. Now, if you have any bis'nus to transact with me, do it at once and make yerself skeerce hereabouts."

"I have come on business to the Hermit Trapper. These woods and the lake are all the red-man's. He has permitted the Hermit Trapper to live here and hunt and trap for many suns, undisturbed. Does Great Wolf not speak the truth?"

"Not edactly, Mister Wolf. For I have a claim on these diggin's, which, in justice to yer scalps, you haven't disputed. Besides, you didn't say any thing about the traps you set of lazy louts stole of me onc't."

"The Hermit Trapper is growing old. The winter of life has put threads of frost in his hair and weak babble in his tongue. He talks much and thinks little. But the word has come to our village that he has promised the pale-face settlers that he will be their chief and scout, and warn them of danger when danger is near."

"Well, whose bis'nus is it?"

"Is it the way to repay the red-man for his kindness?"

"Kindness!" sneered the trapper; "was it a kindness for you durned buggers to try to get my scalp over on Beaver Creek? Talk to me of kindness! If you hadn't been a

pack of cowards, you'd had my scalp long ago."

"Age has made the trapper's tongue loose. It says many things that his mind knows nothing of; but, Great Wolf has come to him with a message from Black Buffalo, the great chief of the Sioux."

"Wal, chip it out. What's ole Buff got to say?"

"That the Hermit Trapper must leave our hunting-grounds."

"And you don't say so? Wal, if I refuse to go, what then?"

"The chief bade me bring the trapper's scalp to his lodge."

"You don't say! Did you tell him you'd do it?"

"Yes."

"And do ye think ye've got the muscle to lift Old Solitary's hair?"

"Great Wolf's strength is like the panther's. He can take the scalp of the Hermit Trapper."

"Ye can? Ah me, what a brick you are, Great Wolf. But, do you think you can take my scalp alone?"

"Yes; easy."

"So ye didn't bring any help with ye, eh?"

"No. Why should I? Great Wolf is not a coward. He does not fear an old man."

"Ye may not be a coward, Great Wolf, but you're an onmerciful liar."

As Old Solitary thus spoke, he thrust his hand into his bosom. He saw that the savage was determined to bring about a conflict, and he could no longer stay his emotions.

"Let the white Hermit beware," said Great Wolf; "the Sioux are on the war-path, and there is the result of Great Wolf's prowess and strength," and he drew from under his blanket three fresh scalps, which, from the color of the hair, he knew had belonged to whites, and held them up before the trapper's eyes, evidently to provoke him to some act of violence.

But the trapper still maintained an attitude of silence, his hand still thrust in his bosom.

"Why does the Hermit Trapper not speak? Is he a coward?" the savage continued, following up the advantage he believed he had already gained. "He has called Great Wolf a liar; let him prove it, or he shall die."

Quick as the lightning's flash Old Solitary withdrew his hand from his bosom with his finger upon the trigger of a cocked pistol which he leveled at his couch of skins in one corner and fired.

A shriek of agony burst from the pile of skins. There was a wild upthrowing of a pair of savage arms; the skins were thrown aside, and the form of an Indian warrior, writhing in his death-agonies, was revealed to their view.

Old Solitary had discovered that a savage was concealed there, shortly after entering the cabin. From this he knew that Great Wolf was there for mischief.

The savage giant seemed thunderstruck by this sudden movement of the old trapper, and started back appalled. But this diversion lasted only for a moment. With all the demon of his savage heart depicted in his brutal eyes, he uttered a yell, and bounded toward the old trapper with a gleaming knife in his upraised hand.

### CHAPTER V.

#### PRIDE HAS A FALL.

OLD SOLITARY was expecting this movement, and was prepared to defend himself. With his left hand he caught the descending arm of the savage near the wrist, and thereby arrested the blow aimed at his breast. Then, putting all his strength into the effort, the old trapper gave the arm of his antagonist a sudden "wrench," causing the giant's fingers to relax their grip upon the knife, which fell to the floor at their feet.

With a sudden movement of his foot, Old Solitary brushed the weapon into the fire that Great Wolf had taken the liberty to kindle on the hearth. The savage saw that the least effort to recover the weapon might result disastrously to him, and so he attempted to grapple with the trapper. The latter, however, had no desire to close with him, having more confidence in the virtue of his fist than his science as a wrestler, and with one well-directed blow full in the face, he felled the savage giant to the floor.

But, quick as thought, almost, Great Wolf was upon his feet. Maddened by his repeated repulses, he made another desperate lunge at the old trapper, only to go down before another blow from the Hermit's sledge-hammer fist.

The trapper had now gained an advantage over the half-blinded foe, and for the next ten minutes he did nothing but knock the Indian down as fast as he could get up. The face of the red-skin was pounded into a shapeless mass, and the blood was pouring from his mouth and nostrils.

Then Old Solitary took a cord from a pin on the wall and proceeded to make his antagonist prisoner. This he found a difficult task, for the savage had not, by any means, been outwinded; however, after a sharp tussle, he succeeded in passing the cord—which had an eye on one end—around both of the Sioux's arms, then formed a noose by threading the eye with the other end of the cord, which he drew up until the arms of the savage were drawn together behind his back. His legs were secured in a similar manner, and the



mighty Great Wolf lay as helpless, almost, as the dead comrade near his side.

"Tickle my scalp, Great Wolf, if this isn't a different view of the matter than what you had anticipated," the old trapper said, triumphantly. "You underrated my few gray hairs, my lack. I may not be as nimble as a cat, nor plant as a willow, but I think I can strike hard enough to spread any Indian's nose over his face, as you can bear witness."

The Indian made no reply, but the withering look that he gave his foe was fierce and malignant, and told that his unbending spirit had not been, as yet, conquered.

"I know it's hard, red-skin, but a big lummecks like you to have to keel under, but you brought it on yourself, and now you must grin and bear it. You came for my scalp; now, how'd you like to go back without even your own?"

There was a convulsive swelling of the warrior's great chest that told how hard he was struggling to keep down all outward signs of the emotions of fear and humiliation surging within him.

Drawing from his bosom a keen-edged hunting-knife, Old Solitary advanced, and bending over the head of the savage, he grasped his long, flowing scalp-lock in one hand, while with the other he flourished his knife about the head in a menacing manner.

Whatever the warrior's inward emotions were, the trapper failed in forcing an outward expression.

At length, with a sudden whirl of the knife, he shaved the entire scalp-lock from the Indian's head without injuring the scalp. To the Indian, it would only have been an addition of physical pain to have taken his scalp, and would have heaped no more disgrace upon him than by the loss of his scalp-lock—an Indian's pride. This Old Solitary knew, and not wishing to scalp him alive, he did the next best thing, by cutting off his hair.

When this was accomplished, he took the dead savage from among the robes and laid him back to back upon Great Wolf. In this position he bound the dead warrior to the living. He then permitted the latter to rise to his feet with his lifeless burden.

"Tickle my scalp, if you ain't a handsome bird, Great Wolf," remarked the old trapper, in a taunting manner; "ha! ha! ha! if you don't trot along home pretty fast, your peepers will close up till after the funeral, for I see you've got 'em in mournin'! I'm a tuff ole boy, Ingen, as you doubtless know; still, I'll let you go back to your chief and tell him that, for reasons over which you had no control, you didn't git my hair, and left your own as a memento. Now, Ingen, trot out this shanty and make yourself scarce in these diggins."

The old trapper opened the door, and permitted the defeated savage to pass out with his dead comrade lashed to his back. Then he watched him move down the hill, and disappear in the woods beyond the valley with a firm, unflinching footstep.

"To save trouble in the future, I'd opt to shoot the big varlet," the old trapper mused, "but then I want him to feel the pangs of his defeat, and he'll be a good source to publish among his friends, the virtue that is in my fist. Still, I expect trouble. The devil is loose 'mong the red knives, and I feel uneasy 'bout the folks at Mound Prairie. But I will run over now and see 'bout that smoke in the woods. It may be a party of Great Wolf's friends, and if so, I may have another visit soon."

Seizing his rifle, and leaving the cabin, he took his course in the direction of the lake. He moved with hasty footsteps, for by this time the shadows of night were gathering fast.

On reaching the summit of the bluff, from whence he had first discovered the smoke, he halted and swept his surroundings with an eagle-like gaze. Far across the lake, in the timber, he saw through the gathering twilight the bright twinkle of a camp-fire. Simultaneous with this discovery he detected a vivid flash on the shore near the camp-fire, and a moment later the sullen crack of a rifle came across the water.

"By the holy pocus!" exclaimed Old Solitary. "The Monster of the Lake must be abroad to-night; and he moved rapidly down toward the lake, and was soon lost among the dense shadows of the woods."

#### CHAPTER VI.

##### MOUND PRAIRIE—ITS SETTLERS—AT THE LAKE.

There is sometimes a beauty, as well as an aptness, in the names applied by the earlier settlers of the West to the material objects of the universe. Like the red-man, they have given to the mountains, the rivers and hills, names that are in harmony with the spirit they suggest. This comes from a closer intercourse and sympathy with nature's varied features, each of which, to a lover of nature, speaks in a silent eloquence. Such must have been the feelings of the settlers residing some fifteen miles east of Silver Lake, when they bestowed upon their settlement the appellation of Mound Prairie. For here the prairie broke into a sea of low, gradual mounds, that presented an agreeable appearance to the eye, and gave relief to the monotonous sameness of the wave-like undulations of the plain.

These mounds, averaging an acre to their surface, covered a scope two miles wide by three in length. Through the center of this tract, a small stream wound its way with the sinuosity of a serpent, and small mounds of oak timber, called "oak openings," were interspersed thickly over the mounds; and in among the inviting shadows of these groves, had the settlers erected their cabins.

The settlement, or rather the colony of Mound Prairie, numbered about a hundred souls. It was composed mostly of families from Ohio. A few others, however, had joined the colony after its entrance into the territory, and as they had had some experience upon the frontier, their acquisition to the colonists' force was of great service to them, for, although the Government had purchased all that portion of the territory from the Indians, and had thrown it open for pre-emption, the purchase of the land did not insure peace to the settler. The tribe of Sioux and Arapahoes disputed the right of the Sacs and Foxes—of whom the purchase had been made—to the land; and as they felt there were no restrictions that they were bound to respect. So they were permitted to remain in the territory, there being insufficient emigration at the time to warrant sending an army to drive them from the country.

It wanted an hour of noon on the day

that the events transpired as narrated in the preceding chapter, when two maidens issued from one of the cabins of Mound Prairie, and sauntered leisurely down one of the pleasant avenues that lay between two small groves of stately oaks.

The eldest of the two was a woman of perhaps one-and-twenty summers. She was tall, queenly, and graceful, with dark-blue eyes, soft and mild as a summer sky. Ethel Leland was not distinctively handsome, but was good-looking, and possessed of a gentle, winning way, that was far more bewitching to all who met her than all the beauty of a Venus. Among her male acquaintances she had many admirers, yet she was quite indifferent, for one of her gentle, impulsive nature, to their attentions. Some thought she was inclined to flirt, but it was because they did not know her heart as well as she did herself; and others prophesied that she and Captain Roland Disbrowe would eventually marry.

Ethel was an orphan, and had been since she was a mere child, but she had been adopted by her father's dearest friend, Maurice Fayville. Mr. Fayville had cared for her with all the tenderness of a father. She had been educated and endowed with all the privileges of his own daughter, Mildred, whom we now find in Ethel's company, and whom we will introduce to the reader.

Mildred Fayville was not over seventeen years of age, with dark eyes full of the spirit of mischief, dark-brown hair, and a form sylph-like in its grace and beauty. Full of life and merriment, with a heart that had never known a moment's trouble nor sorrow, she was one in whom the spirit of joy and happiness was pre-eminent.

"Oh, Ethel!" exclaimed Mildred, enthusiastically, "are not Mound Prairie and these oak openings a perfect paradise?"

"It is a very beautiful, Millie," replied Ethel, "but I do not know whether it will quite bear the appellation your enthusiasm gives it."

"I know I exaggerate sometimes, Ethel, but then it is my nature. I do love these groves and prairies, with their birds and flowers, and think one's heart must be very unimpressible if he or she can not see any beauty in them."

"That is all owing to a poetical temperament, Millie, for while some people can see nothing to arouse a passing interest in the commonality of nature's objects, others may become enraptured with the same. But, sister, should the reports that we hear nowadays—of coming trouble with the Indians—be true, how quick would all the romance fade from these openings? Every tree we would imagine concealed a savage, and every sound the stealthy footstep or subdued voice of a skulking foe."

"I hope the reports will prove to be without foundation, Ethel."

"We all wish that, Millie; but Old Solitary, the Hermit Trapper, brought the news several days ago, and they say his judgment of such things is seldom at fault. However, he has promised to keep a watch upon the movements of the savages, and warn us if they are likely to make any sudden hostile demonstrations upon Mound Prairie. And I must say that I do not favor the idea of the men going over to the lake on a hunting excursion."

"Why, Ethel, are you afraid the Monster of the Lake will catch your lover, Captain Disbrowe?" and Millie laughed merrily.

"No, not at all, Millie," replied Ethel.

"Then you surely don't love Roland?"

"No, I can not say that I do, but I admire him. He is gentlemanly and kind, though at times there is a reserved silence in his demeanor that I can not understand."

"Well, I always supposed you loved Roland, sister, and would marry him some day."

"I could never love him, Millie, for my heart was given years ago to another, whom the cruel hand of fate took from me."

"You allude to Frank Hammond, do you not?"

"Yes."

"It always makes me shudder, Ethel, to think of that terrible Hart's Ford murder. Frank must have had a terrible heart to beat and mutilate a fellow-being as he did Henry Hohn."

"Yes, it was a terrible deed, Millie, and I can not help but think that Frank had helped in that affair, if he had any thing at all to do with it."

"The evidence was plain against him, Ethel; and without a doubt he committed the murder, or why would he have fled the country?"

"He may have had enemies that implicated him; but, be that as it may, with the brand of murderer upon him, I still love Frank Hammond."

"Your love for him must be of an extraordinary nature, Ethel."

"I admit it is, sister. It is a love that can never be supplanted. I may marry Captain Disbrowe, but it will only be for a home of my own."

"For a home?" asked Mildred, with apparent surprise; "have you not a home already, Ethel?"

"Yes; a good one, too; but I can not always be dependent on the generosity of father Fayville."

"Tut! tut! Ethel; what will I do when you leave me?"

"You will marry young Harry Thomas, and be a happy little wife, living with the man you love."

Millie blushed scarlet, and her eyes drooped shyly. For, more than once, she had pictured in her mind the joy and happiness that would be hers when she became the wife of Harry Thomas, to whom she had already pledged her love.

"Ethel," she finally said, "it has been five years since the Hart's Ford murder. You were scarcely seventeen then, but in love with Frank Hammond, the murderer of Henry Hohn. Ever since then, the handsome, gallant Captain Disbrowe has been constant in his attentions to you, and yet he has not won your love from Frank. It is a singular case of love. Had he been your husband then, there would have been a difference."

"You have a wrong idea of love, Millie. One can love but once, if he or she loves truly."

"Yes, yes, I know," said Millie to herself, "but then there is a mystery connected with this love of yours, Ethel; there is a hidden secret in your poor heart, sister."

Millie was tempted to express these thoughts in words, and would probably have done so had she not heard footsteps approaching them.

"There comes Harry now," said Ethel; "he is coming to have a word with you, sister, before he leaves for the lake. So I will leave you with him, and return to the

cabin," and before Millie could utter a protest, she turned and tripped away.

Harry Thomas, a fine, handsome youth of twenty, and the lover of Mildred, came up and joined his little sweetheart, and together they continued on among the tall oaks.

Ethel intended to return to the house, but before she had reached the door, a shadow fell across her path, and Captain Roland Disbrowe was at her side.

"Ethel, my dear girl, I was just wishing for this opportunity," he said; "we are going to start for the lake in a few hours, and I want to speak to you on the subject which has been nearest my heart for five long years, and of which I have spoken to you more than once."

He drew Ethel's arm within his own, and together they walked out into the openings and seated themselves on a fallen log, beneath the green canopy of a wide-spreading oak.

Captain Roland Disbrowe was a man of, perhaps, thirty years of age. In form, he was tall and commanding, and carried himself like one accustomed to military discipline. In feature, Captain Disbrowe was called handsome, though there was a little fierceness about his dark, piercing eyes. A heavy black mustache shaded his mouth, and concealed the few traces of sensuality that hovered there.

Captain Roland Disbrowe was a man of the world. Early in life he was thrown upon his own resources, and by the time he was one and twenty he had picked up much information in the school of experience. He had given himself a liberal education, and had traveled a great deal abroad in Europe, and had spent a few years in California, where he had accumulated a small fortune in the convenient commodity known as "filthy lucre."

It was some five years previous to the opening of our story that he first met Ethel Leland, fell in love with her, proposed and was rejected. Ethel told him that Frank Hammond had won her heart. Disbrowe accepted his fate, but shortly after his rejection, Ethel's lover was compelled to flee the country, on the charge of murdering a neighbor named Henry Hohn.

About the same time Disbrowe enlisted as a soldier in the Mexican war, and when he returned three years afterward as Captain Disbrowe, he found Ethel still single, and at once renewed his proposal for her hand. Ethel declined to answer then, but he received encouragement enough to give him a hope of eventually being accepted by the fair object of his adoration.

About this time a colony was forming in the neighborhood for the Far West. Among those who had joined it was Captain Disbrowe, and in order to be near Ethel, Captain Disbrowe became a member of the colony also, and it was two years later that we find them all located at Mound Prairie, in the flourishing territory of Iowa.

When their interview had ended under the oak, and Disbrowe and Ethel returned to the cabins, the face of the former wore a happy, joyous smile, while that of the latter was pale and sad—the index of a heavy heart.

This opposition of feeling arose from the fact that Ethel had promised to become the captain's wife at no distant day, and while he was happy over their betrothal, she was sad, for her heart was not given to him with her hand. She was only marrying him for a home, for she was too proud-spirited to live dependent upon the generosity of Maurice Fayville.

When she found herself alone in her room, after parting with the captain, she sat down and wept bitterly.

"Oh! if I only knew," she moaned, "whether or not I will be committing a crime by marrying him! My poor heart can never stand this torture. Oh! Frank! Frank, my darling, if you are living come to me, for I know the stain of murder is not upon your hands! I know that you —"

Here her bitter thoughts were broken abruptly off by the sound of a stranger's voice in the adjoining room in consultation with Mr. Fayville. There was something about the voice that startled her, for it sounded frightfully familiar, and she bent her head and listened.

"When did you arrive in this country?" she heard Mr. Fayville ask the visitor.

"I arrived at Fort Dodge two days ago," the man replied.

"Well, I am glad to see you, old friend," Fayville replied, "but what has brought you so far from home?"

"Business," the same old business I always followed."

"Indeed!" returned Fayville; "but I hope you don't expect to find any roughs out this way?"

"That Hart's Ford murder is not given up yet, and I think after five years I am at last on the track of Frank Hammond, the murderer."

"Oh, God!" Ethel cried, wringing her hands in anguish, "it's Dart, the detective, and upon the trail of my Frank. Merciful heaven, will those hounds of the law never cease hunting him down, for a crime of which he is innocent?"

#### CHAPTER VII.

##### THE MONSTER OF THE LAKE.

EACH fall during the brief time that Mound Prairie had been in existence as a settlement, the settlers had been in the habit of going to the lake to lay in a winter supply of fish and wild game, such as the country afforded at that time.

On the day that we call the opening of the reader to this settlement, a party of six men left the place for Silver Lake. Among the number were Captain Roland Disbrowe and Harry Thomas.

They were all skillful hunters, and with the assistance of Old Solitary, the Hermit Trapper, they had always been successful in their hunting-excursions.

Three days later another party was to follow them with pack-animals to bring back the game.

Captain Disbrowe had been appointed leader of the hunting-party, not because it was necessary to have a leader, but that the direction of the party might be vested in one man, and thereby avert the diversity of opinions that generally arise in such a crowd, as to their movements.

The captain seemed unusually happy on this occasion, and left the settlement with a buoyant heart. His companions wondered at the change that had come over him, for they never dreamed that he had been engaged to Miss Leland for years; and they would have been surprised had they known that, not until that day had the captain received the promise of Ethel to be his wife, at no distant day.

Not knowing this, however, his companions believed he was outgrowing some of those faults—for all men have their faults—in consequence of which he was losing favor with the estimation of some of the settlers. The captain had more than a usual amount of self-conceit, and in this he had been sustained, to a certain extent, by the settlers, who had put him forward on all occasions. From this he had been induced to consider himself an exemplary man, possessed of more than ordinary decision of mind, which placed him a grade higher than his fellow-beings. And the result of this self-esteem was an air of arrogance and vanity that soon had a tendency to discredit him in the estimation of some of the settlers.

But his acceptance by Ethel seemed to have infused him with a new spirit, and now, as they journeyed toward the lake, his demeanor was such as to regain much of the lost favor of his companions.

I said there were six of the hunting-party. This was true so far as the hunters were concerned, but there were seven in the party. Jabez Dart, the Ohio detective, accompanied them, not because he expected to further his search for the agent of the Hart's Ford murder, but to satisfy his curiosity in regard to the Monster of the Lake, a terrible creature of the serpent species, that haunted the waters of Silver Lake.

The reports about this creature seemed incredible, but when they were confirmed by such men as Captain Disbrowe, Maurice Fayville and others of equal reliability, all of whom had seen the monster, there was no denying the assertions however improbable they seemed.

The dragon, as some termed it, was some ten feet in length, covered with huge scales, and shaped about the back like a fish. The head and neck, however, were those of a serpent, the former being rough and angular, with eyes deep-set and fiery.

From each side, wings like those of a vampire bat, put out near the middle of the scaly monster; but instead of being used to navigate the air, they were as propellers in the water like the fins of a great fish.

This was the description of the monster given by Captain Disbrowe to detective Dart, and, as was natural enough, the officer's curiosity became aroused to the highest pitch, and he resolved to have a glimpse at the creature, so he accompanied the hunters with this sole object in view. At least, if he had any other object under consideration, this reserved habits as a detective held him silent.

The parties being well mounted, the timber bordering Silver Lake, which was only fifteen miles distant from Mound Prairie, was reached more than an hour before sunset, and pushing on through the woods, they finally reached the lake, the home of the mysterious Monster.

Here the party came to a halt, and dismounting, secured their animals and went into camp.

A favorable spot was selected, and a pair of small tents erected to protect the hunters from the chilly air at night, for the place was to be their evening rendezvous during their stay at the lake.

As it was too late to do any thing that day in the way of hunting, the party concluded to spend the evening in watching for a glimpse of the Monster of the Lake. So a fire was struck, and Harry Thomas having been appointed to superintend the culinary part of the excursion, set about preparing supper.

This required but a few minutes, for they had brought a stock of cooked food with them. Each man was supplied with a tin cup from which he drank his steaming coffee as well as his punch, which was taken as an antidote to counteract the effect of the malarious atmosphere along the lake.

After supper, the party gathered around their fire, some indulging in pipes, and all listening to some of detective Dart's wonderful stories, the facts of which came to his knowledge while discharging his duty as a detective. The officer seemed perfectly at home among the hunters, for he had known most of them in Ohio, and the years that he spent held their attention so deeply enchained that they failed to observe that darkness had gathered around them.

At length, however, Dart ceased his stories to light his pipe, and during this interval of silence, Harry Thomas said:

"Boys, it's dark as pitch. Had we better not extinguish this fire for fear of danger?"

"Why so?" asked Dart; "are there hostile Indians about? or are you afraid of the Monster?"

"There may be Indians about," replied Thomas.

"There are, I am satisfied, no Indians in this neighborhood, gentlemen," said Captain Disbrowe, in a tone intended to settle that subject at once, and for all time.

"But isn't it about time we were looking out for that Monster?" asked Dart.

"Yes," replied Disbrowe; "we can conceal ourselves near the water's edge. The moon will soon be up, and then if the Dragon is abroad, we will be apt to see it."

So saying, each man with his rifle in hand, proceeded to a point where the lake shore was densely fringed with willows. Concealing themselves near the water's edge, they waited and watched in breathless silence for the Monster of the Lake.

An hour passed by. The moon came up and cast its mellow beams across the still waters of the lake. Far across upon the opposite side of the glimmering sheet, over a mile distant, the seven watchers could see the dark forest outlined against the clear sky like the dark range of a distant mountain.

To the southward the water and plain melted away into a purple haze, while around them, all was darkness and silence—silence, excepting those sounds peculiar to the wilderness after nightfall.

Now and then they would see a solitary night-hawk skimming along the surface of the lake, or the occasional coruscation of a firefly within the belt of shadow along the eastern shore.

The longer the party waited the deeper the silence seemed to grow, and the edginess of the hunters finally began to grow restless, and once intimated that he believed the hunters were trying to perpetrate a joke on him. But, the captain managed to keep him quieted down, and assured him that the Monster was no mythical creature.

As the moon rose higher and higher in the heavens, the shadows, cast by the trees along the eastern shore, crept slowly in toward the bank until there was but a narrow belt along the water's edge.

As the minutes wore away, our friends suddenly detected a faint pluck in the water within that narrow belt of darkness, somewhere to the right.

All bent their heads and listened. They could distinctly hear a light splash of some

thing in the water to their right, and from the sound, it seemed more like the dip of a paddle than ought else. However, they waited and watched. The sound seemed to be approaching along the shore under cover of the narrow belt of shadow.

At length they saw tiny waves chasing each other out into the lake, and heard them chafing the beach at their feet. Whatever it was in the water, it was hugging the shore closely, and seemed to be within a rod of them.

"It's it—the Dragon! the Monster!" whispered Dart; "shoot me if I can't feel its hot breath in my —"

He did not finish the sentence, for, at this juncture, a canoe, containing half a dozen hideous-looking savage warriors, floated out from the shadows into the moonlit waters within a rod of the group of watchers.

This unexpected sight filled the men with no little surprise and sudden fear, and despite their emotions, they maintained a breathless silence, for the eye of every savage was turned toward the shore and in a line with the camp-fire.

From this it became apparent why they were there. They had discovered the camp-fire, and were skulking around to obtain what information they could in regard to it, no doubt, with an eye to a few scalps, for they were in war-pat.

But whatever their intentions, they were, without a doubt, doomed to disappointment. For, while they sat in their canoe gazing shoreward, their attention was suddenly drawn in another direction by a sound in the water.

The settlers heard the sound also. It came from along the shore to the left, and was a noise similar to that of a shoal of fish passing over a shallow bar.

A low cry of terror pealed from the savages' lips, while the hearts of the white men seemed to cease beating, for, simultaneously, both parties saw, bearing down upon the savages' canoe with glowing eyes and flaming tongue, the Monster of the Lake!

(To be continued—commenced in No. 147.)

## A Strange Girl: A NEW ENGLAND LOVE STORY.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.  
AUTHOR OF "THE WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPE," "AGE OF SNADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

#### CHAPTER XXV.

##### THE FACE IN THE GLOOM.

THE deacon looked into the anxious face of Embden in considerable astonishment. It was plain that for a moment he thought Embden was out of his head.

"What do you think?" asked Embden, anxiously, finding that the deacon did not reply. "Do you think that when the day of judgment comes they will have to answer for the bloodshed?"

"Well, really, your question covers so much ground that it is hardly possible to form an opinion on the subject," the deacon answered.

Embden looked terribly disappointed. A painful expression came over his features, and he bent his eyes to the ground.

"It's a great pity," he half sighed; "if you could help only give me your opinion, deacon, I think it would help me to a power of good. It's awful if a man's got to answer for blood spilt that way, when he didn't do nothing himself."

The deacon looked at the workings of Embden's face for a moment, and then a sudden light seemed to flash upon his brain.

"Mr. Embden, excuse me, but I don't think you've put the case exactly right. Our civil war was not brought on by men but by circumstances. It was really fated to be, like a thunder-storm to clear the atmosphere. Let me put a suppositional case, which I think I can do, and the answer may suffice for the question which you have in your mind."

"Mebbe you can, deacon," Embden rejoined, raising his head as he spoke and looking at the deacon with an anxious expression upon his features.

"If I get your meaning rightly, is a man guilty of murder who takes no part in it himself, yet by his action or actions makes that murder possible which otherwise it would not be?"

"Yes, that's it, deacon," Embden said in deep attention, breathlessly hanging as it were upon the words of Paxton.

"Now, we'll suppose a case: Two men are engaged in a struggle; a third man stands by and looks on; he makes no attempt whatever to interfere, he has reasons what they may. One man of the two is killed; is the looker-on then guilty of the—"

"Hold on, deacon," interrupted Embden, gravely and evidently deeply excited; "that don't cover the ground at all!"

"No," said the deacon looking perplexed. "Not the case I was; the man brings on the fight; it wouldn't hev commenced but for him, and he could hev prevented it if he'd a-wanted to."

"But he took no actual part in the affair, himself?"

"No, only he told one man to come to the place and he told the others that he was coming; but of course he didn't know that the first feller would be killed by the other ones, though he kinder 'spected there'd be a leetle trouble." Embden spoke in a hurried, constrained manner; evidently the subject was a very painful one.

Paxton looked at the old skipper for a moment in silence. There was a thoughtful expression upon his smooth, benevolent face.

"I think I understand it now," he said; "I will put the case again: There is a man who has enemies. Another man induces him to go to a certain place at a certain time; and beforehand he tells this man's enemies that the man will come to that place and at a certain time, and he knows that they will lie in ambush there for him. He is not really certain that they intend to kill the man, but he is fully aware that they are enemies, and that they do not lie in wait for him for any good purpose. The man comes, decoyed there by the second party; he is set upon, and in the struggle is killed. The man who has decoyed him takes no part in the struggle —"

"A mile off!" interrupted Embden, breathlessly, and hardly able to sit still in his anxiety.

"Is a mile off, or a rod, or ten miles; the distance is nothing," the deacon continued; "he does not strike the man, does not lift a finger against him —"



the man would get killed," Embden added, earnestly.

"That amounts to nothing at all," the deacon said; "but, does the case that I have stated suit?"

"Yes, to a hair!" was Embden's solemn reply.

"And you want my opinion as to the guilt of the man who acted as the decoy to the slain man?"

"Yes, yes."

"Well, sir, in the eyes of Heaven, I think that he will be held to be more guilty than the men who really shed the blood, and that, if there is hell-fire hereafter, that man will roast in it, beyond a doubt."

With a hollow groan, Embden sunk back in his chair; another second and he fell helpless to the floor; he had fainted.

"Hullo! hullo!" cried the deacon, rising, in alarm. "I made the dose too strong. Poor sinner! Of what use is his money with this weight hanging on his soul?"

The deacon did not call assistance, but took the pitcher of ice-water from the table and sprinkled the face of the old man. Then he raised him gently in his arms and placed him upon the lounge. He sprinkled some more water upon his face and loosened his necktie.

"I wouldn't carry around the weight this man bears for all the money in the State of Maine," the deacon observed, as he stood by the old man.

Slowly Daddy Embden revived.

With a helpless, scared look, he glanced up into the deacon's face.

"Do you think that he'll rally well, deacon?" he asked, anxiously.

"If he sincerely repents he may be saved," the deacon replied, with real solemnity.

"If I was only sure of it," Embden muttered, half to himself, half aloud.

"While the lamp holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return; though his sins be as red as scarlet, yet His love shall make them white as snow," the deacon reminded his patient.

"S'pose he got money, too, through this killing?" Embden asked.

"Let him give it back!" cried the deacon. "Blood-money is accursed; it is a weight which sinks the soul down to hell. Brother, let us pray!"

Together the two men knelt down, and a short and earnest prayer the deacon offered up; the mind of the old skipper went back to the time when he knelt by his mother's side, by the little trundle-bed in the humble widow's cottage, and prayed to the Lord of Hosts, who, on St. George's bank, had taken unto his bosom the sailor husband and father of that home.

"And now give me your hand, Peleg," the deacon said, without rising from his knees. "Now promise me that this man, morning and night, shall pray for forgiveness; make him give up his ill-gotten gains; such money never brings prosperity. Let him go back to his former occupation, no matter what it was, no matter how humble. A crust and a contented mind are better far than boundless riches and sleepless nights."

"He shall, deacon, he shall!" and the tears were streaming in the eyes of the old man.

Then the two rose to their feet. The gloom and dusk of the evening surrounded them.

"Deacon, do you believe in spirits?" asked Embden, suddenly, and with a nervous glance around him.

"From the other world? No."

"Well, I didn't used to, but I'm beginning to believe that there are such things. I seem to hear things in the air round me after dark. I don't see anything, but I expect to, soon."

"It is only your imagination, Mr. Embden," the deacon said, reassuringly, placing his hands on the old man's shoulder.

"Mebbe it is. Wal, I'll bid you good-night; I'm much obliged. I feel a great deal better. Nathan was coming with the carriage, but I guess I'll walk and meet him."

Paxton escorted the old man to the door, and watched him until he got half-way to the gate; then he closed the door.

"I know now what preys on Embden's conscience, but it is still a question with me where he got all that money," he said, as he ascended the stairs to the library again.

Embden was walking slowly to the gate, with his eyes fixed upon the ground.

A hedge, some four feet high, separated the grounds of the mansion from the street. The gloom had thickened quite rapidly, and one could scarcely see twenty feet in advance.

Just before Embden got to the gate he happened to look up, and he beheld a sight which froze his blood with horror.

Just beyond the gate a face appeared in the gloom.

Embden recognized each feature in an instant—although many months had come and gone since he had looked upon the face in the flesh.

But that face, since the dark night when the Nancy Jane floated with the turn of the tide down the Rappahannock and out into Chesapeake Bay, had been ever present before Embden's eyes.

The proud, handsome, southern features; the eyes of fire and the white forehead half-covered by the straw hat.

And now, framed in the gloom of the night, the face appeared before him, but, even to the panic-stricken eyes of the feeble old man, it looked much fresher and more youthful than when he saw it in life.

The face had grown young in the other world.

A moment only Peleg Embden glared upon the sight, and then, with a low moan, he sunk helpless, almost lifeless, to the ground. The sea had given up its dead!

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE SPIRIT AGAIN.

About half-past eight, Nathan, Daddy Embden's "hired man," hitched up one of the horses to a light buggy, and started for Deacon Paxton's house, in Saco, after the old captain.

He did not hurry himself, but drove along leisurely, as Delia had instructed him to get there about nine.

As he drove up the crest of the hill, on the Saco side of the river, he consulted the old-fashioned, open-face silver watch which he carried.

"Five minutes of nine," he said; "I guess I'll be right on time."

He had driven slowly in front of a drug-gist's shop which afforded him light, so that he could consult his time-piece.

"Git up, Jim," he cried, touching the horse with the whip.

Five minutes more and he halted in front of Deacon Paxton's house.

"I guess I'd better let the old man know I'm here," he said, as he left the buggy.

Nathan opened the gate and advanced up the walk toward the house. He had only taken some five steps when he tumbled over a dark body on the ground and went sprawling at full length upon the walk.

"Damnation!" he cried, picking himself up in disgust. "I wonder who on earth that is stretched out there? He must be pretty drunk, I s'pose!"

Then Nathan bent over the motionless form and rolled the senseless man over on his face.

"By gosh! if it ain't the old man!" he cried, in profound astonishment; "drunk all through, too," he added. "Wal, I never knewed that the deacon got men slewed in his house afore. I s'pose I'd better carry the old rip home and keep my mouth shut 'bout it."

Then the strong-limbed Yankee lifted the helpless form of Embden from the ground—an act which seemed to call the old man back to consciousness. A low groan came from his lips; he opened his eyes slowly and stared around him, in a feeble, vacant way.

"Where is it?" he muttered, slowly and nervously.

"I guess the deacon's in the house, cap'n," Nathan said, thinking that the old man referred to Paxton.

"No, no, not the deacon, the other?" and Embden glared around him with dilated eyes.

"Who in thunder does he mean?" Nathan queried to himself, in wonder.

"Didn't you see it?" the old man asked.

"See the deacon?"

"No, no; the other; that dreadful sight," the old man moaned.

"I s'pose the old feller is awfully slewed," Nathan muttered, to himself.

"Which way did you come?" Embden asked, suddenly.

"Straight from the house; there ain't but one road, you know, squire."

"And it was going that way," the old man persisted; "you must have met it."

Nathan looked at the speaker in profound astonishment.

"I guess that he must be as crazy as a bedbug," he concluded. "I wonder who in thunder he's talking about."

"Oh, dear!" Embden moaned, helplessly; "I want to go home."

"All right, cap'n; got the buggy outside."

"But you are sure that you didn't see anything as you came up the road?" Embden demanded, suddenly, and looking Nathan straight in the face.

"See what, squire? Darn me if I know what you're driving at!"

"Can I be going crazy?" the old man asked, speaking more to himself than to the astonished listener who supported him in his arms.

"I guess you are, or awfully slewed," Nathan muttered, in an undertone.

"Oh! the dead can't come back, can they, Nathan?"

"I guess not; I never heard of anybody coming back arter they once kicked the bucket."

"Yet I am sure I saw him; it was the same face, and the eyes glared at me with a stony, reproachful look."

"Show!" Nathan ejaculated, in wonder; "I better get the old feller home, or he'll be cleanin' snakes all over the deacon's front yard the first thing I know."

"Nathan, you won't let him touch me, will you?" the old man asked, earnestly.

"Guess not! I'd flax the daylight right out'n him!" Nathan replied, gently urging the old man to the carriage.

Embden was shaking and shivering as though an icy wind was cutting him to the bone.

After considerable trouble Nathan got the old man into the carriage, and, turning the horse around, started homeward for Biddeford—the old skipper muttering in disconnected sentences as they rode onward.

Nathan was bothered. He kept a close watch upon the old man, for he had now made up his mind that Daddy Embden was going crazy.

"The old fish may take a notion to bite me, first thing I know!" he muttered; "I never hired out to take care of a mad critter. I'd like to sell out this job, cheap!"

But the old man showed no signs of violence, although his mutterings gave strong evidence of an unsound mind.

All the while they rode along he was peering out, watching first one side of the road and then the other; and every now and then he would mutter: "I do not see it! I do not see it!" and Nathan as often would put the question to himself, "Who in thunder does he expect to see?"

They drove through Saco and crossed the bridge.

Just as they left the bridge and commenced to ascend the little hill on the Biddeford side, Embden gave a sudden, hollow groan, and slid out of his seat down into the body of the buggy all in a heap. He had fainted again.

Nathan was terribly alarmed, and drove to the top of the hill before he attempted to render any assistance. Then he let the horse jog along slowly, while he tried to revive the old man.

It was only a few minutes before Embden recovered, and then he looked up into Nathan's face with trembling features.

"I saw it again," he muttered.

"Saw what, squire?"

"A spirit from the other world!"

"Show!"

"Yes, oh, I know the face; it has allers been afore me since that night when it floated down the Rappahannock, ghastly in the moonlight."

"Lordy!" cried Nathan, a cold shiver passing over him; "you don't mean for to say that you saw a real ghost walking in the street?"

"Yes, I saw it," the old man replied, earnestly; "that is what made me faint. He looked just the same, too—a straw hat and a military cloak wrapped around him; he was a Southern officer."

"And you saw him just now?" Nathan questioned. He was a strong-headed, level-headed, practical Yankee, and no believer in ghosts.

"Yes, right down the street there," and Embden indicated the left-hand side of the road as he spoke.

"Say, squire, if you'll mind the horse, I'll find out what it is or bust!" cried Nathan, with an air of determination.

"Yes, do!" the old man cried, eagerly.

So Nathan stopped the horse, gave the reins into Embden's hand, jumped out, and walked quickly down the street.

Two dark figures stood on a corner, conversing together.

As Nathan passed, he saw that they were two of the mill-girls.

Nathan walked on for full five minutes, but, with the exception of the two girls standing on the corner, not a single soul did he see.

"I guess the old buttons is crazy, anyway," he said, as he halted and looked around him. "There ain't a man with a straw hat on 'bout these parts. I guess I'd better get him home as soon as I can."

And, acting on this determination, Nathan returned at once and got into the buggy.

"Did you see him?" the old man asked, earnestly.

"There ain't nobody in the street, 'cept two girls," Nathan replied, as he took up the reins and started the horse.

"His face is fair—he does look like a woman," the old man muttered.

"Does he wear petticoats?"

"No, no, of course not!"

"Wal, I didn't see him, and I guess you didn't, neither. I only saw two girls who work in one of the mills. I know both of 'em by sight well enough."

"I saw him as sure as I set here, Nathan," Nathan vowed, earnestly.

Nathan saw that it would be useless to attempt to reason with the old man, so he drove homeward as quickly as he could.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 140.)

## Mohenesto:

### OR, Trap, Trigger and Tomahawk.

BY HENRY M. AVERY.

(MAJOR MAX MARTINE.)

XX.—*Senoras and senoritas.*—Preparing for the Fiesta.—*American Merchants.*—An old friend in a New Place.—*Freemasonry in Mexico.*—Visit to Carson Lodge.—*Northern Freemasons vs. Southern.*—What they all need.—A "Yankee from York State."—His opinion of Mexico.—*Chinches.*—*Mexican Customs.*—Greeting a Friend.—*The Social Evil in Mexico.*—*Pueblos and Church Edifices.*—*The Aztec Faith.*—*Their Devotion.*—*Traditions.*—*Salt Lakes.*—*Strange Old Ruins.*—*The San Juan Valley.*—*Superstitions.*—*Waiting for the Millennium.*

DURING my sojourn in Santa Fe I was struck by the very peculiar taste which the young ladies in that city display in their fondness for cosmetics. Indeed at first sight, it appeared that every woman under the age of thirty-five was afflicted with the mumps, which she concluded was contagious; but I was let into the secret of their strange appearance, by a friend who "knew how it was himself." It seems that the *senoritas*, and for that matter the *senoras*, too, are in the habit of covering their faces with some kind of colored paste or dough, which gives them any thing but an attractive appearance. This painting might, to a casual observer, seem intended as an ornament, got up in imitation of their Indian neighbors, or, it may be, in imitation of our own fashionable fair ones. But not so; it is merely put on as a preservative to the complexion.

A New-Mexican woman is willing to forego the luxury of the bath, and appear hideous three-quarters of the time, for the sake of a clean face and ruddy cheeks with which to grace some *fandangos* or *fiestas*.

Everybody visiting Santa Fe is pretty sure to visit the monte-tables, with which the gambling rooms of the city abound. Nearly all the Mexicans play cards from the time they can run alone until they are ready to die. Priests and publicans, white, black and red, saint and sinner, Yankee and Greco, all gambled.

I found here, also, some old friends from Maine—one, who had been a playmate with me in the little town of Bethel, was running a billiard-hall, with the usual accompaniment of a whisky saloon. He had been a theological student, but finding that he was not enough of a hypocrite, or that he could not "fill the bill," he had wandered off here and was getting rich at the price of his own soul.

Another, who had often fished with me in the brooks of Oxford county, was the owner of one of the finest *ranchos* in Mexico. He had forgotten the flaxen-haired damsel to whom he pledged his youthful love, and wedded with one of the Castilian race; and numerous "olive branches" had sprung up around him, and he seemed perfectly happy. In conversation with him, he said, "I would not swap my *ranchito* for the whole State of Maine. I believe if our forefathers could have found Mexico first, Maine would never have been settled."

And so his conversation ran, lauding to the skies the home of his adoption, and deprecating the land of his nativity.

"Ah, how greatly times have changed—Some have reached the goal they sought—Some are dead, and some are married."

I enjoyed the fraternal visits to Kit Carson lodge of Freemasons, (named after the celebrated scout.) Among the many objects of interest of the lodge of Carson, presented by him to this lodge. All honor to the noble craftsmen of Santa Fe! May their work be ever squared, as it now is, by virtue's square; and may Heaven's choicest blessings rest ever upon them!

There is a singular difference between the fraternity of Freemasons, North and South. Southern Masons are, as a rule, more zealous; not in their lodge-work, but in inculcating the principles of Masonry, and instilling into their everyday life its beautiful precepts. Northern Masons are lukewarm. Once in a while you may find one who knows what Masonry means; but they are like angels' visits, few and far between. A Southern Mason greets you as a brother; and no matter what may be the difference in your respective stations in life, he will treat you as a brother. At the North they are too cold, too formal, too dead. In their lodge-rooms, around the sacred altar, they will perhaps say, "How do you do?" but meet them the next day in the street, and they will not know you!

Of course this is all wrong, and no one but the fraternity themselves are to blame. In their great haste to secure numbers, they have overlooked the question of fitness, and the consequence is, there are many "black sheep" in the flock. No man, if he be a true Mason, can but be a better man for his connection with the order; but there are many who have taken the degrees and thought they had learned it all. They are Masons only in name. If the fraternity in the United States would devote a whole year to purging the order of unworthy members, it would be better than adding fifty thousand to it. But enough of this. I fancy I hear my reader say, "Let him who is without blame cast the first stone," so I leave the subject with the renewed hope that the fraternity both North and South

may become more Masons and less men of the world.

I know of no State in the Union; no country under the sun; to which I would advise a young man to emigrate, sooner than New Mexico. A Yankee from York State," who has found a home among the hills and valleys of the Rio del Norte, said to me: "I would rather be here without a cent, than in York State with five thousand dollars." And such is my humble opinion of the entire Southwest. The opportunities for securing wealth are ten-fold greater there; the climate is the healthiest in the world; and the next ten years will see a greater change in New Mexico than has been wrought in the last two hundred.

But we were traveling for pleasure, and the *chinchies* (in English, bedbugs), which swarm—as every one who has traveled in New Mexico is aware—in this favored land, were decidedly too numerous for comfort, and it was with a sigh of relief that I mounted my *mustang* and bid good-bye to Santa Fe.

As I find the substance of my own observations about Pecos embodied in the excellent work of Vap Tramp, I have taken the liberty of making such extracts as may prove of general interest.

"Pecos, once a fortified town, is built on a promontory or rock, somewhat in the shape of a foot. Here burned, until within seven years, the eternal fires of Montezuma; and the remains of the architecture exhibit, in a prominent manner, the engravement of the Catholic church upon the ancient religion of the country. At one end of the short spur forming the terminus of the promontory are the remains of the *estufa* with all its parts distinct; at the other are the remains of a Gothic church, both showing the distinctive marks and emblems of the two religions. The fire of the *estufa* burned, and sent their incense through the same altars from which was preached the doctrines of Christ. Two religions, so utterly different in theory, were here, as in all Mexico, blended in harmonious practice until about a century since, when the town was sacked by a band of Indians. Amid the havoc of plunder of the city, the faithful Indian managed to keep his fire burning in the *estufa*; and it was continued till, a few years since, the tribe became almost extinct. Their devotions rapidly diminished their numbers, until they became so few as to be unable to keep their immense *estufa* (forty feet in diameter) replenished, when they abandoned the place and joined the tribe of the original race over the mountains, about sixty miles to the south-west. There to this day they keep up their fire, which has never yet been extinguished. The labor, watchfulness, and exposure to heat consequent upon the practice of the faith, is fast reducing the remnant of the Montezuma race, and a few years will, in all probability, see the last of this interesting people."

"The crumbling remains of the ancient church, with its crosses, its dark, mysterious corners and niches, differ but little from those of the present day in New Mexico. The architecture of the Indian portion of the ruins presents peculiarities worthy of notice. Both are constructed of the same materials—limestone, sun-dried brick, and the rafters of well-hewn timber, which could never have been shaped by the miserable little axes now employed by the Mexicans, which resemble in shape and size the wedges used by our farmers in splitting rails. The cornices and drops of the architecture in the ancient church are elaborately carved with a knife."

"How graphic a picture does this description present of the sincere and disinterested devotion of these zealous but deluded worshippers—a delineation which, while it furnishes rich material for the exercise of a romantic imagination, affords much which would give rise to more serious reflections. On the one hand, it excites our idealism by producing the mind's eye a representation of the scene. We behold the huge fires of the *estufa*; we hear them roar and crackle as the silent watchers heap fresh fuel upon the blazing pile; we see the worn and wasted worshippers, whose hollow cheeks and attenuated limbs bear the impress of their faithful and long-continued vigils. We can follow in fancy its devoted attendants, as year by year, and hour by hour, they fulfill their appointed tasks. We see them amid the summer's heat, and in the winter's cold, shivering in the blast, or fainting beneath the sultry sun, as they go forth to procure the material to feed the flames. We can go with them during the long and dreary nights, when the exhausted Indian retires for a moment from the scene of his labors to cool his fevered brow and gaze upon those orbs of whose mighty Creator he is so profoundly ignorant. We can be with him as he returns to renovate the dying flames, working patiently for aught, while the dark hours come and go, though the night winds blow and the pale moon shines steadily without; and even while the 'gray dawn' is lighting up the misty hills, while sweet birds are warbling their matin songs, and all nature is rejoicing in the advent of the new-born day. Yet still he keeps his watch, forgetful of the world, with its myriad beauties, the creation of that master hand whose works are so full of strength, and dignity, and glorious perfection."

"And this is Pecos's view; but there are deeper thoughts connected with the theme. Is there, in the self-sacrificing adoration of these benighted children of Montezuma, no reproof to the weak and vacillating spirit? No rebuke to the lukewarm ardor of the who profess, in this, our enlightened age, to worship one God in spirit and in truth? Truly this is a subject on which much could be written."

The few who still adhere to the Aztec faith cherish a tradition that Montezuma founded the pueblo at Pecos, where he planted a tree, predicting that after his disappearance there would be no rain, and a foreign race would subjugate them. But he commanded them to keep the sacred fires burning until the fall of the tree, when white men from the east would overwhelm their oppressors, rain would again increase, and he would reestablish his kingdom. They say that the tree fell just as the triumphant Americans entered Santa Fe, in 1846. For years the Indians of that pueblo had been decreasing; and just then an old man, the last in the long line of priesthood, died at his post, and the holy fire was extinguished.

The face of the country indicates that in former ages rain was much more abundant than now; and the Pueblos point triumphantly to the fact that it has increased since the advent of the whites. In the Zuni Mountains, and away down the Aztec valley into old Mexico they still burn the halloved flames, and anxiously await the return of Montezuma. In some pueblos a sentinel regularly climbs to the house-top at sunrise, and looks toward the east for his coming. Their religious belief is of the 'unknown God,' whose name is too holy to be spoken.

They have a tradition that "at the flood" a few faithful Zunians gathered upon a mountain-top, and waited long, but in vain, for the waters to subside. At last a youth of royal blood and a beautiful virgin, decorated with feathers, was let down from the cliff as a propitiatory offering to the angry Deity. The waters soon fell, and youth and maiden were transformed into statues of stone, still pointed out to the credulous among the Zuni Mountains.

About a hundred miles southeast of Santa Fe are extensive saline lakes, supplying the entire territory with salt. Right here some speculative Yankee will make a fortune. Near these lakes the ruins of a city contain the remains of an aqueduct, twelve rods long, walls of churches, Castilian coat-of-arms and deep pits in the earth. It was probably a Spanish silver-mining town destroyed in 1680, when the natives killed or drove out the invaders. The ruins of several walled towns reveal pottery and other articles similar to those found in the city of Mexico. Ruins in Navajoe county include the remains of enormous houses, of imposing architecture. In some, explorers have counted the traces of one hundred and sixty distinct rooms upon the ground-floor.

Nearly three hundred years ago, Spanish missionaries found in New Mexico half-civilized Indians, who raised cotton, manufactured cloth, and lived in towns with regular streets, squares and dwellings, like those of the present Pueblos.

Dr. Newberry, of the United States army, found remarkable ruins of old pueblos on the San Juan river, then in New Mexico, now in the south-east corner of Colorado. One of these deserted human bee-hives was inclosed by sand-stone walls, five hundred feet long, twelve inches thick and thirty feet high, and as true and smooth as the walls of the Astor House. The marks on the few timbers still preserved, and implements found in the vicinity, indicate that logs and rocks were split and hewn with tools of hard stone. The huge edifice, six stories high, was divided into small rooms, very evenly and beautifully plastered with gypsum.

The San Juan valley contains many of these ruins, which have been deserted from three to five hundred years. Once it was swarmed with the busy life of half a million of people, now it has no human being. Dr. Newberry inquired the reason of this from an old and intelligent Pueblo chief, who replied that at the invasion by Cortez, Montezuma made such heavy drafts upon the able-bodied men of the province as to leave old men, women and children unable to defend themselves from the surrounding Utes, Apaches and Navajoes, and compelled the entire population to emigrate southward. This theory is supported by the fact that the most ancient pueblos, which were built in mountain fastnesses easily defensible against numbers and valor, are still inhabited, while those in the open country are deserted.

The Aztecs have inherited the superstition of their forefathers. Notwithstanding the changes which time, with its cohorts of emigration, books, religious teachings, science and art, in greater or less degree, has introduced into their country, and accomplished under their eyes, they still believe that some day their great chief Montezuma will return to them; consequently the watch-fires are kept burning to let him know where his children live. One does not notice this practice, however, as much in New Mexico as in the Aztec valley of the Rio Gila River.

Both old and New Mexico abound in mineral treasures; and before it was Americanized the Mexicans dug gold from its mountains to the amount of a million dollars per year. Now most of the Americans in Mexico are engaged in trading; but ere long a mining excitement will cause emigrants to pour in and revolutionize the country, socially and politically.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 139.)

**American Slang.**—The utter ignorance of the English of the significance of American slang expressions often causes some curious scenes between them and the Yankee buyers in England, who seem to think that because their language generally is understood, all their American idioms will be.

An expert buyer, junior partner in one of our large American firms, at a recent visit to his correspondent in an English manufacturing city, was complimented by the senior partner of the house, who insisted on personally showing goods to his American purchaser.

"There, sir," said Dowling, throwing out a roll of goods, "what do you think of that?"

"Oh, that's played out," said the American.

"It's what?"

"It's played, I tell you."

"Played—ah, really? We call it plaid, hyar in England, but this isn't plaid—plaid, you know."

"Ah, that's the Yankee. 'I don't mean plaid. I mean to say that it's gone up.'"

"Oh, no," said the Britisher; "not at all; it has not gone up—quite the contrary. We've taken off from the price."

"Over the left; it's three pence too high now."

"No doubt of it; but our neighbors, you know, on the left are no manufacturers."

"Very likely; but I don't care to be stuck when I get home."

"Really! Most extraordinary! Is it as dangerous in New York as the newspapers say?"

"Yes; but I don't want these goods. I have got some already that will knock the spots out of 'em."

"But, my dear sir, there's no spot on the goods, I assure you. They are perfect."

"Well, now, suppose we switch off these goods, and try something else?"

"Certainly."

And the Englishman, to the infinite amusement of the American friend, called a clerk with a



## THE SATURDAY JOURNAL

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### THE NEW SERIAL

#### Mrs. Jennie Davis Burton,

commencing in the next issue of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, is one well calculated to excite the deepest interest and to command uncommon notice, for, among the serials of the day, from American or English popular writers, it will stand out as distinctively powerful, original and captivating. In this romance, viz.:

### THE FALSE WIDOW;

#### Florien Redesdale's Fortune.

Mrs. Burton has sensibly developed in her authorial career; and, if her previous productions, fine as they were, foreshadowed a strength untasted or untried, in this she betrays what that strength is. With the keen eye of the true author she detects, even beneath the almost angelic face of one of her own sex, an art and artifice that would shame a man; and this character, acting her double part, constitutes the central figure of the group of *dramatis personae* that are given prominence.

Florien, the stepdaughter and Ward, is a most admirable creation. At once brave, confident, true, she is a dove for whom the vultures of her own household sit in waiting, and her feet are entangled in the meshes of a web so cunningly woven that none can see and none can break.

The Young Artist, frail and perverse in moral nature, yet having in his soul qualities almost of sublime good, is a center of fascinating interest; and the queenly girl who becomes to him a secret power, is, we think, one of the most exquisitely sad and touching personations in all our fiction literature.

These are, of course, only a part of the elements of interest and action. How the web was subtly woven, and how its meshes were at last suddenly sundered, by a train of circumstances which prove that the ways of sin are full of peril, the reader will read to learn, and reading will vote the romance to be one of the very best that has graced any popular paper for a long while.

### Our Arm-Chair.

**Chat.**—The Musical publications for the month are very fine. The *Song Journal* (C. J. Whitney & Co., Detroit), gives, besides its admirable reading, eight pages of original music—all for ten cents!—The *Musical Visitor* (John Church & Co., Cincinnati), is a rich compend of Musical Literature, news and correspondence, and also presents eight pages of music.

—The *Orpheus* (Bond & Co., New York), is a very spirited record of music in the cities of New York and Boston, and is therefore a journal of considerable local influence and interest. It is enriched with four pages of music from "La Grand Duchesse," giving three of its most noted airs.—Dio Lewis' new publication, *To-Day*, is making for itself a good reputation. It is charmingly illustrated, and, while having a good, strong installment of fiction, in each issue, is as charged with suggestive fact as one of the new patent batteries with electricity. Dio's hobby is human health and common sense in daily life habits, and he says some suggestive things in a very striking way.

—Talking about new publications reminds us of the laugh that will come in when we read of the "premium" offers of periodicals and papers. They are all running the chromo mill so strong that, if every house in the land is not charmed, it will not be the fault of benevolent and patriotic publishers who, for every subscription to their paper or magazine, actually give, gratis, a "chromo" worth ever so much money—say four times the cost of the subscription! Why, it is a perfect art deluge. Pictures—pictures, everywhere; real chromos, whose essential art value is incontestible, and whose market value is equally well established. Of course, we are quite reconciled to this reign (or rain) of pictures, just as we are reconciled to pretty girls, or canary-birds, or any thing else ornamental; but, what we smile at is the mental aberration apparent in the publisher who persists in giving so much for the money. Either one of two things is true—that these publishers are astonishingly liberal and self-sacrificing, or that these "chromos" are cheap as pasteboard to produce, and are worth, intrinsically, less than one-tenth of their asserted value. Which is it?

—A Widow" advertises as follows, in a paper whose locale we will give on application:

"Wanted—A brave-hearted man, who has buffeted the storms of life and did not tremble for the issue when the troubles came, may be refined and respectable; middle-aged and discreet.

Will thou leave me in my anguish,  
Groping on through life alone?  
Shall I, weak and trembling, languish,  
With no arm around me thrown?"

Will thou! And if any one is so brutal as to deny her the right to wilt, may he have cold feet until next leap-year.

—The Spaniards, who are not notably a moral people, have a saying: "White hands never offend"—which means that little faults and indiscretions of ladies should always be quickly pardoned. But, as the Spaniards point out the man who purloins in these faults and indiscretions, we are not sure that "Castles in Spain" are at all desirable.

—The slaughter of evergreen trees for Christmas purposes is something fearful to contemplate. Why, in five years more the very hills of Labrador will be denuded of firs. It is all well enough to erect the "Christmas tree," but it is now fast becoming a question if Santa Claus isn't doing a deal of harm. If some Yankee can't supply a substitute for the holly tree and evergreen, then Congress will have to come forward to save the trees from extinction.

**The Mound-Builders.**—In our last issue we referred to the existence of a subterranean chamber beneath Lexington, Kentucky, wherein the dead of the extinct prehistoric race were deposited. That chamber is only one of numerous evidences of the fact that this continent once contained a population far more numerous than the succeeding red or Indian races, who seem to have come in upon the country, from the North-west, many centuries after the principal people had wholly perished. In California, for instance, as well as in the Lake Superior country and in Northern Mexico, numerous evidences exist of mines having been worked extensively, and tools have been found of copper, hardened by some now unknown process so as to be used as we now use steel. The great crystal of nearly pure copper, weighing a ton, discovered in the Lake Superior some years ago, was found in a hole where the ancients had left it in the very act of prying it out of its pocket or bed. So long had it lain there, after its abandonment by the ante-Adamites, that over thirty feet of earth had settled in and quite filled up the ancient excavation—geologists say at least ten thousand years of sedimentary and natural deposit.

In California other evidences besides mines exist, to tell of the habits of this lost people. In a recent account of the great "shell mound," as it is called, at San Pablo, we have these statements:

"When within three miles of the town we came to a shell mound rising up from the plain to almost the dignity of a hill, and which is now covered with a growth of shrubbery. There is no telling when or by whom that mound was raised, that is almost a mile long and half a mile wide.

"Fragments of pottery made of red earth, not to be obtained anywhere in this State, are found on the surface and near the top, and about two years ago Mr. McHenry, the owner of the land, dug a trench, and at a depth of twenty feet, sixty feet in from the west, near the base, found numerous skeletons of Indians of all sizes, and some bones of dogs and birds and many implements of stone. One baby had been rolled in a menstruously long piece of red silk, like the mummies, and had been covered with a coating of a sort of asphaltum. Mr. McHenry also found in other parts of the hill evidences enough to show that this mound was a burying-place for some extinct tribe of Indians, as the skulls are different from all others known in some particulars.

"Where the red silk came from would puzzle any one to know, as this must have been a primitive race, judging by the rude implements and utensils. All the skeletons were in a sitting posture, with their faces turned toward the west. The shells that form this mound are oyster, clam and mussel shells, all having been exposed to the action of fire, and nearly all broken fine. Very rarely are entire shells found: The same kind of mounds, though not so large, are found near San Mateo, on the San Francisco side. They are all near the shores of the bay, and have been made of shells of the oysters and mussels that the Indians used as food, and which they evidently roasted to open."

This writer falls into the common error that the Indians deposited the shells there because their remains are there found, when the evidence of a far more remote origin exists in the very magnitude of the shell deposit or accumulation. Such a vast collection of marine life never was due to the red race, which is not a race of fishers but of animal hunters. The Indians found that gigantic shell hill long after its original gatherers had become extinct or had passed away. It is as if some colony of fifty thousand souls had camped upon San Francisco bay or the coast adjacent, and had, for a considerable time, sedulously searched the waters for oyster, clam and mussel, bringing them to one common rendezvous, and there, by fire or hammer, opening and making food of the delicious bivalve. This only can account for a hill a mile long, a half-mile wide and over twenty feet in depth. In this hill the Indians found a good burial-place—hence, the presence of their remains there.

If, as asserted, a baby skeleton, wrapped in red silk and smeared with asphaltum, has been exhumed from the pile, then it establishes the fact that that body, at least, was the child not of savages but of a people from the East, where silk was woven at a very remote age; and this gives rise to another supposition to which we shall refer in a succeeding number of the JOURNAL.

### HOW STRANGE!

How strange it is, when we are possessed of a little more money than our neighbors, we think ourselves to be a little better than they, just as if money elevated us in the social scale; and the moment our pocket-books become too small to contain all our greenbacks, we must hold ourselves aloof from "common people." We don't treat the person who wears a faded dress with the same cordiality we do the one arrayed in the satin garment, even though the former may be gifted with more talents and nobleness of heart than the latter. Give me the one with brains, and I'll not look to see whether her dress cost ten cents or ten dollars per yard.

How strange that people are always so glad to see us when we can loan them money, or do them a favor; and yet, if we desire to borrow of them, they look rather blue at us, and really you must excuse me to-day, as I am in a great hurry. The Bible tells us that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." But how few there are who carry that precept into practice.

How strange it is that we want to outshine our neighbors in a new dress, cloak, or hat, and how badly we feel if some one has managed to get the first choice of the new fashions before we had the chance to do so. And how we long for the church bells to ring, not to thank the Almighty for the benefits He has bestowed upon us during the past week, but because we shall have a fine chance to flaunt down the broad aisle, and cause every one to turn and admire what we have on. To notice what others are wearing may be worship, but it is the worship of Mammon.

How strange it is that we are so much engaged in our own affairs that we do not see the hundreds around dying for the want of common necessities, while we are squandering money without stint, on articles which will merely gratify our caprice or minister to our vanity. We wonder why we are called upon to aid this individual and that:

are there not others who could do it? Supposing all were to make this speech, how would the poor be relieved at all? Some one at some time has given aid to you, and when you have the power to help others, it is no more than your duty to do it; it is, indeed, a solemn obligation.

How strange it is that we are so soon forgotten when we have passed away; that the world moves just as it did when we were alive, and that we are scarcely missed except by our own intimate family. At first, there will be flowers placed upon our graves daily, and the marble monument will be kept as white as snow; but the years pass; others have taken our places; there are stains of the dripping rain on our monuments, and weeds choke the once sweet violets and myrtle. It is a sad thought; yet, is it not a true one?

How strange that we rail against this world so much, when it is so filled with its innumerable beauties, and presents so many delights to the eye, ear and taste. It is with ourselves the fault must rest; we disfigure its loveliness by our own bad conduct. Because we are so ill-tempered and dissatisfied, we can think of nothing else to blame, so we blame the world, when the world is, by far, too good for us to dwell in. To a contented mind the world is a little heaven of itself; it sees virtues where another can find only vices and follies.

How strange that a kind word will lift many a burden off a poor life-traveler's back, yet stranger still, how we withhold it, and, by our continued slights and censures, add more to its weight. How sweet gentle words are, and how valuable they are when we know them to be sincere; yet how it rankles one's heart to be scolded at and talked to, as though we could be made better by it. Kindness is the raft to save a person when drowning in the ocean of misfortune; and you may as well sink like a plummet if harsh words are his portion. And I think when it is so easy to do right, how strange it is we don't do it. And echo whispers in my ear, "How strange!"

EVE LAWLESS.

### Foolsap Papers.

#### Casabianca.

WHEN I was a boy, nothing ever affected me so much as the story of Casabianca. My boyish breast was rent in twain, torn in two, broken asunder as it were, and the copious tears—yes, that's the word—copious tears rolled from my eyes in cataraacts, and you could see the course they took for a whole day, by two clean streaks down my cheeks.

I have attempted to recite it dramatically on the stage, but I would be so overcome by the terrible story, that I invariably broke down and never succeeded in getting the boy off the burning deck, whence all but him had the good sense to flee.

I loved to emulate him, and once, fired by reading it, I rushed out and set the picnic afire, and got upon the roof and stood there, "beautiful and bright as born to rule the storm," and I called aloud, "Say, father, must I stay?" and my father came running out and said he guessed not, and jerked me down so suddenly, and went to work on me so vehemently with a barrel stave, that I thought the deck had blown up, and the enemy's hundred-pounders were still blazing away.

This boy—that stood on the burning-deck's name wasn't Casabianca, but plain Tom Dickenhara; and during the battle his father had told him to stay where he was till he came back, and he stayed there. He had probably tried that little game of disobedience before, and knew what it would result in. Now, in my boyhood I have often done a good many things which seemed heroic, when in fact, I was constrained to be heroic for fear of getting an unmerciful licking; and, after all, I never got into the school-boys' row, and I don't think I ever had justice done me, while other boys, who have been brave and all that, have got themselves killed and done up into poetry for the benefit of other children, who are learning to read. Never mind, I am getting up a new Whitehorn Reader, in every chapter of which I will appear to great advantage and applause.

As I was going on to say, the boy stood on the burning deck, all alone, and kept the battle up himself; all the rest had jumped overboard, and swam ashore as fast as they could run, for they knew that "He who runs and fights away will always live to draw his pay." This little bit of a boy would load a big cannon all by himself, take it up in his arms, and fire it right into the other vessels; and all the while the flames rolled up on all sides of him and made him sweat; they completely enveloped him, and he found that it was absolutely necessary to pull off his coat; still he would brush the flames away, and load and fire the cannon so rapidly that it got red hot, and that was what he wanted, for he then could fire red-hot balls, and make a general red-hot time, while he was at it.

The cannon-balls flew around him. One of them struck him on the mouth, and nearly knocked a tooth, a front one, down his throat. When he ran short of balls, he would reach up and take in one on a fly, and all the time he would shout, "Say, father, must I stay?"

The flames burned all his clothes off him, but he said he didn't care a cent for the loss of them, as he could get plenty more at a second-hand store. The flames wrapped around him, but he remarked that he didn't care for that as he was getting mad, and even if he did run away, the old gentleman would half kill him any way.

A mast fell, and he picked it up and pitched it over into one of the ships, and it mashed in the deck and killed a great many; and he said he could do without a mast, anyhow. And still out above the booming of cannon and bursting of bombs, his voice was heard, "Say, governor, don't you think it would be consistent with the nature of things—I say with the nature of things—for me to get out of this here?" but no answer came. A 15-inch shell passed through his bosom, and at the same time a ball took both his arms off, but he continued to put in his time at loading and unloading the cannon as if nothing had happened, until it melted and ran over the burning deck, upon which, you have already been informed, he stood whence all but him, etc.

At last all the ship was burned up except the magazine, and the powder which had been burning for some minutes, took a notion to go off on a sudden.

"Then came a burst of thunder-sound, The boy—oh! where was he?"

Well, the last that was ever seen of him he was about four miles up, still shouting, "Say, father, is it incumbent on me to stay?"

I should be very glad to see all you little boys become Casabiancas; it would do you good and perhaps be a benefit to your country. Respectively,

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

### Woman's World.

**Among the Workingwomen of New York.**—The Brain Workers—Sister Writers as Rivals.—The Rocky Shards of Trade—Women's Clubs—Noble Dependence the only True Independence.

In strange contrast to the world of society and fashion is the Workingwoman's World of New York. Yet I am not one of those who would claim for the latter class more inherent nobility, goodness and truth than can be found among their more favored sisters. We do not find any greater number of philanthropists among men in the ranks of labor and trade than we do among those born to easier fortune; and men and women are not so very unlike in their moral natures, as is generally supposed.

Among the workers of this world, both men and women, the natural and laudable emulation to excel and acquire too often becomes degraded into a cold, mean, selfish and unprincipled contest for places, positions and emoluments. Noble indeed is that nature which comes out of the struggle for wealth, fame, or even a livelihood in the densely-populated city, without being sullied, and rendered sordid and mean; and it is said to see that women can become even more cunning than men in all the arts and artifices that are mislabeled "business rules" in New York. Even in the higher ranks of labor, among the brain workers, women display the same emulous spirit that rival authors, journalists and editors do—only greater cunning being displayed to conceal their hatreds, envies and ill-wills than men use.

I thought when I was a younger woman, that all people with cultivated tastes had, as a matter of course, properly disciplined moral sentiments and honorable principles, and that literary pursuits refined the moral sensibilities of women even more than those of men. I have found that I could be mistaken. It sometimes only refines their ingenuity in cruelty to each other.

There is a great outcry made about the nobility of working and independent women. Now, if a woman is poor and obliged to earn her support, she is obliged to be independent. Where is the "nobility" in doing what she is obliged to do? But if she bears the burden patiently, sweetly and honorably, then the nobility comes in; otherwise she is no more noble than the veriest idler who lives an objectless, aimless life of puerile vanity and self-gratifying pleasure. Ah! but, you say, the trials and temptations of a life of struggle—do they not purify a woman, and make her stronger, and better, and nobler? Yes, if hers is a strong and Heaven-guided spirit. If she is true gold, the dross will be burned away, and she will come forth doubly refined. But, alas! too frequently she is converted into a Becky Sharp, with only a narrower, lower sphere in which to exercise her sharpness.

In every large dry goods and fancy goods establishment, as deep and wily a game of intrigue for the best places, the heads of the departments, is carried on as among the courtiers in a queen's drawing-room. As I make my rounds, hunting up new fashions, and inventions, and household matters, I often find what I do not hunt for: confidences from the poor girls which it would be most unwomanly in me to reject.

"You see, madame," said one to me, not long since, "I can not live on seven dollars a week, and dress as I do. I am obliged to dress in this manner, or I would lose my place; and, moreover, the better I dress, and the more goods I sell (and that in a great measure depends on my dress), the more chance I stand of getting the direction of this department and an increase in my salary. Now, to tell you the truth, I am in debt for two months' board and this cashmere suit. The head saleslady in this department is becoming very careless; and I saw how rude she was to you just now. I know you have influence with Mr. B., so you write for the papers, and of course he wants all the notice he can get without paying for it, and you are *real good-natured*," with a smile worthy of the original Becky. "Now, I would be so glad if you would give him a hint of my politeness and smartness, and of her rudeness at the same time. You know how to do it," with another vanquishing smirk.

I could not despise this poor girl, but from the bottom of my heart I pitied and deplored her as I moved on, wondering what was my duty under the circumstances. To bleach and whiten the soiled wares and wool of the character of that young woman, would take more time than I could spare in making the attempt. She still retains her subordinate position.

Nearly all these poor girl clerks are in debt—nearly all of them are as cunning as serpents—but, not as harmless as doves, and the worst of it is their wiles are mostly exercised against each other.

Some attempts have been made at forming clubs, associations and trades unions for them, but the results have not contributed materially to their elevation. The most influential of their societies, as a general thing, degenerate into fields for just such intrigues for places and positions as do men's clubs, and there is a narrowness of spirit and an envy of superiority displayed, that is truly pitious.

Some few married women who have one foot in their little world of society, and another still lingering in the world of trade—women who are looked up to by these poor girls, because they have achieved a little worldly success by marriage or other means—rule these associations for their own private vanities, *piques* and preferences, just as men do in their Tammany and Germania and Lotos and Americus and Arcadian clubs. The only difference is that it all goes on in a narrower sphere and in a more contracted manner.

Now, I fear that too many of my sex will think I am cruelly censorious and unfeeling to a certain class of working women. Very far from it, however. To remedy our ills we must begin at the root of the matter and tell the truth, however disagreeable that truth may be. Moreover, we must remember that God made us as we are, dependent by nature, and we are independent only in violation to His original intention, and at the behests of a progress in civilization which I, for one, protest against. Our remedy must be in a return to our normal condition—a noble and enduring dependence, which is, in reality, the only true independence for woman.

EMILY VERDERY.

### Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future editors. Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only when stamps accompany the enclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, leaving off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its folio or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find an ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We report favorably on the following: "The Loom of Life," "Deceived," "A Live Song," "A Love Letter," "A Memory of Spring," "Tyring Memories," "A Book of Poems," "When I am Dead," "A Memory of Twilight," "Memory Haunted," "Sleep Sweetly," "Going Away," "A Youthful Fancy," "A Woman's Whim," "In the Glade," "Love and Friendship," "Be and Done and Done It," "Magdalen," "Wrecked" (somewhat defective in rhythm and measure, but good in sentiment); "Papoo," "A New Year's Poem."

The following we can not make available, and return, where stamps were in, in a very day scene in New York: "Forsaken," "Gracie's Triumph," "Stella's Reward," "Kate Musgrove," "A Bad Conscience," "The Trysting," "A Brother of a Boy," "The Late Parent," "Oh, No!," "A Wise Widow," "Major Peterson's Courtship," "The Three Belles."

Authors whose MSS. are "dashed off" in moments of leisure between other work are not likely to meet with much favor from critics that require perfectness.

HARNET J. We can not "drop a line" to authors in regard to MSS. Always look in this department for answers.

BRUCE ADAMS. All the authors named, in due season. No paper can keep off their favorite writers running all the time. We can give no more proper share of space during each volume. We now have MSS. in hand from every one of the parties.

C. G. G. St. Agnes' Eve is January Twentieth. It is celebrated in song and verse as the eve when maidens, by certain charms, may sleep and have dreams of their future husbands. The poet Keats' "Eve of St. Agnes" is one of the finest poems in the English language. St. Agnes was a Christian virgin who suffered martyrdom A. D. 304, and afterward reappeared to her parents in a glorified aspect, with a lamb at her side, announcing herself as the bride of Heaven, and thereupon became the patron saint of maidens.

Mrs. SALLIE C. B. We turn your letter for answer over to Mrs. Batley.

S. N. W. We advise no young lady to bestow her photograph upon comparative strangers. It is regarded as an evidence of a poor taste in friendship, which, of course, is only safe in proper hands. No young lady can know a man in ten days' acquaintance.

A PRESIDENT READER. The postage on the SATURDAY JOURNAL to One Hundred and Twentieth street is twenty cents, in advance.

A letter, with remittance, addressed to E. Rene Carroll, Malden, Mass., is returned to us not called for.

S. H. D. The glass manufacture is carried on largely in Pittsburgh. Glass bottles are blown. Glass is sand (grit) melted in a pot, and blown into a shape.

ALFRED J. MAURICE. The Apollo Belvedere is a statue of the god Apollo discovered in the ruins of Antium at the close of the fifteenth century. It is regarded as one of the finest pieces of sculpture in the world. It was placed by Pope Julius II. in the Belvedere of the Vatican—hence its name. For definition and signification of Belvedere see dictionary. The mystic characters refection of the statue are merely an advertising dodge to arrest attention.

HARRY P. EDWIN FORREST, just deceased, made his best reputation in the characters of Jack Cade, Sparrow and Coriolanus in the plays of Shakespeare. He was strong personations, but were popular only with that class who like severity of action rather than a subtle conception of the character. He may be said to have won no honors for the last fifteen years.

OSKOR. The Black Crook is but a miserable drama, as such. It doubtless is the best work of a stage "adapter," the scene painter, the carpenter and the French ballet-master. Humpty Dumpty is another miserable specimen of the mongrel drama. It is a mere mass of ridiculous and unstrung together by George Fox, and has but little dramatic authorship about it. Mr. Albert W. Aiken is now on the stage.

B. B. B. asks "How is my hand?" He should ask the girls.—The wages of a wood engraver are just what he earns, from ten to forty dollars per week. Of architecture draughting, which profession we know but little. We supposed, however, that, as a general thing, architects did their own designs.

J. W. W.'s queries in regard to grammar are answered by grammar. His mistake in the use of the word "invented" is the study or science, for it simply grew into shape, form and law by development.

MORDECAI. Your suggestion is a good one, and for the benefit of our numerous readers we will give it, and sincerely trust that very many of the New York SATURDAY JOURNAL's friends will profit by it.

MORDECAI writes us that he is now fifty-five years of age and has seven children, the eldest a boy of twenty-one and that, upon the birth of each child, he placed in his hands a sum of money, in the form of pocket-money as they could spare. Thus, his children all have nice sums of money in bank, and his son of twenty-one, with the interest accumulated and his savings, has nearly one thousand dollars to start life with. Try this method, parents, in behalf of your children. Even though the amount be ever so small, which you may say, it is, remember, the nucleus of a larger sum.

MAGGIE MAY. Nil nien sans peine is the French for No pains, no gains.

KRITTE McCRAKEN. Tortoise-shell ear-rings and bands for the wrists are much worn by young ladies for ordinary—gold, coral, etc., being reserved for dress occasions. A great display of jewelry at any time is not considered elegant.

JULIA S. Good omelet can be made by stirring or beating together eight or ten eggs, adding a pepper and a small lump of butter, and cook quickly, only being careful not to scorch it. When done, serve up hot.

ROSETTA. Mince pies are very nice made after the following receipt: One pound of finely chopped, boiled or roasted beef; half-pound of suet; one-quarter of a peck of apples cut in square pieces; one pound of raisins; one pound of currants; one nutmeg; two tablespoonfuls of ground cinnamon; one tablespoonful of ground cloves; the juice of two lemons; some mace; one pound of sugar moistened with water; and one pound of mince, all night, and when using you can add, if you like, two ounces of citron cut in very thin strips. Also a "pony" of brandy to each pie.

Z. D. F. To make peach-flavoring, crack the stones and take out the meat; seal it with hot water to take off the skin; then put the meats into wine. It soon will be ready for use.

COLD SPRING HARBOR. You can place your child or infant in the Foundling Asylum of New York City. Address a letter to the "Manager of the New York Foundling Asylum," and ask for full particulars.

MARTHA. You should not always speak ironically, as it will become most distasteful to your friends. By irony we mean a refined species of ridicule, which, under the cloak of earnestness, professes to contrive to what the words really express. Dem Swift was one of the most noted of ironical writers, as he was one of the most insincere and dishonest of men, notwithstanding he was an eminent church dignitary and author. He was by nature a selfish and lawless man, and irony seemed his most appropriate language.

WILLIAM TELL. The gannet is a sea-bird similar to the common goose, with a straight bill and palmed feet. It is found in the northern parts of both continents in summer, and feeds principally on fish.

YACHTSMAN. A "laten sail" is a triangular sail, extended by a long yard. It is used in small boats, especially on the Mediterranean Sea.

FARMER JOHN. Maize is only another name given Indian corn. Either is proper. The English call it grain corn.

OSCAR O. Merino, the all-wool fabric, so popular for ladies' dresses, is so called from the wool of the Merino sheep, from which it is made.

CARRIE HUNT. Do not be ashamed to let your friends know that you can cook and make yourself useful in many things. On the contrary, you should be proud of that accomplishment.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.



## WIND SIGNS.

A voice at the portals of the New Year.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

Hush!—tis an hour of silence,  
Weird, and strange, and deep—  
Midnight! Midnight over the earth—  
Hollost time of sleep!  
All calm!—all still!—all dark and lone!  
Not a sound the faintest—no, not one!  
The clock has tolled, the night of day,  
The first new hour of New Year's dawn!  
And peaceful still, while yet they may,  
In comfort souls are slumbering on.  
Snowing, snowing on roof and street,  
Mists of pearl in a noiseless fall,  
Breath of winter with tearful elee—  
Silently pouring,  
Darting and soaring,  
Stars of snow from that somber pall  
Spreading below like a mystic sheet.  
Deeper, deeper the pure white mist  
Grows on the paths so coldly kissed;  
Higher, higher the drifts of snow  
Pile as they come in that distant flow;  
Is the tale that's told  
Borne on the wind in its sighful blow.  
A strange voice would seem  
Like a voice of a dream,  
Mournfully swelling amid the snow—  
Moaning and weeping,  
In its soft sleeping,  
Telling, telling of scenes of woe—  
And though the flakes are merrily leaping,  
The wind sighs sadly its song of woe!  
"I have seen, I have seen," sung the voice of the wind,  
"Years upon years roll slowly past;  
And the years with their new joys of piteous kind  
Have, too, like the old,  
Their lives that are cold—  
Burdens and sorrows that always last."  
"This night, as I mourned beyond the town,  
There in rude rage and tattered gown,  
I have seen, I have seen such a sight of grief,  
That the rich would not think of nor lend belief."  
"Plooding, staggering over the road,  
Sobbing bitterly 'neath her load—  
With many a wail,  
Shrieking in misery, freezing and sore,  
Driven despairing from door to door—  
Fled till her feet were numb with pain,  
Starving there in the snowy rain;  
No more to cheer,  
Gasping for breath,  
From the lips quivering  
Prayer before death!"  
"Nothing for her in a world so drear,  
No voice to soothe her to stay the tear,  
Tears so hot on a cheek so pale,  
Yet turned to ice in the wintry gale;  
Nothing for her, in the glad New Year,  
Nothing, how little, to bring her cheer;  
No one to pity her, dying for care,  
Buffeted, friendless—and yet—so fair!"  
"Her bed, to-night, is the cold, pure snow—  
No covers, no down,  
No warm soft gown,  
But only the cheerless, drifting snow!"  
"Perhaps, in a time not long gone by,  
Her life was of music without a sigh;  
Perhaps the gay flowers of scent and hue  
The others possess,  
And praise and bliss,  
Had blown their beauty on her path, too;  
But now!—ah! I—  
I had gathered up my reins, and was  
About giving the spur to my tired steed,  
When a voice sounded in my ears, causing  
Me to hold hard. It came from behind,  
Pronouncing the hail, *Hola!*  
My horse answered it with a snort, and  
Reared suddenly round. There was a woman  
Upon the plain!"  
"Though the hail had prepared me for this  
—for it was in a feminine voice—words can  
not speak my amazement. But the moment  
before I had scanned the prairie round.  
It was level as the bed of a billiard-table,  
and smooth as a fresh-mown meadow.  
There was nothing on it inside a circle of  
ten miles diameter. And now within less  
than twenty paces stood a woman!"  
"Whence had she come, or sprung? Risen  
out of the earth? Or dropped from the  
clouds? I caught myself looking toward  
the sky, interrogating the clouds!"  
"Was it in reality a woman? Or only a  
lusus naturæ—some vision conjured up by  
my brain long laboring, or engendered by  
the atmosphere? I had been often mocked  
by the *maravilla*. Was it a fresh trick this  
singular phenomenon was playing me?"  
"Doubting, I rubbed my eyes, and set them  
straight upon the figure. As I have said,  
it was scarce twenty paces off, and, as I  
saw, approaching. Step by step it was  
coming on, drawing nigher and nigher.  
Surely it was no chimeræ of the brain, no  
atmospheric illusion, but flesh and blood.  
That, too, in its fairest form. Surely was it  
a woman."  
"Her voice put the matter beyond doubt.  
"Alonda ex. Ramon?" she said, still con-  
tinuing to approach. "They are ready to  
start. They wonder at your being so late,  
and sent me to see if you were coming.  
What detained you? Why do you tarry  
there?"  
"The final exclamation was in a tone very  
different from the rest of the speech. As  
she pronounced it she made a sudden stop,  
raising her hand to her forehead, to shade  
her eyes from the sun. With this low  
down, and directly behind me, she could  
but see some one on horseback. And her  
words proved, she had mistaken me for another."  
"I saw that she was scanning me; and,  
without saying a word, awaited the result.  
It came in a half-suppressed cry, ending  
in the exclaim, "¡Valga me Dios!"  
The tone told of surprise, chagrin, even  
anger. All these were commingled in her  
look."  
"She was turning, as if to retreat."  
"Stay," I said, entreatingly. "It is true  
I am not Ramon, but—"  
"But who?" she asked, again facing  
round, and coming to a firm stand, while a  
gun which she carried was dropped butt  
upon the ground.  
"Well, one who will not harm you."  
"Not harm me! Indeed! Ha! ha! ha! That's  
very fine! Ha! ha! Who fears you, sir? Do I  
look like one who can't take care of myself? You  
harm me! Ha! ha! ha!"  
At this she raised the gun, and held it  
half-levelled upon my horse's head.  
But for her laughter I might have felt  
fear. But this, ringing clear and loud, pre-  
cluded all idea of danger.  
As she continued to laugh, long after she  
had ceased speaking, I occupied the time  
in taking a survey of her person.  
The figure was that of a woman full  
grown, though not long out of her girlhood.  
In size almost masculine, but only in this.  
In every line it displayed the true feminine  
contour; bust, body, arms and limbs boldly,  
yet gracefully developed. The face was of  
a pronounced beauty, even when the scowl  
was upon it. In laughter it was lit up  
by a serrature of white teeth that showed  
neither speck nor flaw. These formed a  
pleasing contrast to a complexion more  
than sun-browned, further relieved by that  
damask blush on the cheeks which gives  
the picturesque look to damsels of dark hue.  
Around the face was a framework of raven  
hair, spreading beyond both shoulders, and  
streaming like a torrent down her back, till  
it almost trailed the ground. Under this

ble. Which there were not; here and there  
only a scratch, where the iron had torn up  
the turf, through my horse suddenly turn-  
ing.

What hope of my comrades coming up,  
or in sight? About as much as a man in  
mid-ocean, adrift in an ear-boat, might have  
of being seen from a ship. Such might  
pass within less than five miles of him,  
without any one aboard sighting even the  
crown of his hat. I was in the middle of a  
prairie hundreds of miles in superficial ex-  
tent. I knew it to be so. I had been upon  
it before, many times, in pursuit of a band  
of Indians, who had made a *maravaj* upon  
the frontier settlements. Commanding a  
corps of Mounted Rifles, I had pursued the  
savages in discharge of duty. But then I  
was in company—at the head of my troop—  
with skilled trackers to guide us. Even  
then we had to go with caution; and on  
both occasions, to our chagrin, the red-  
skins escaped us. Now alone, and know-  
ing myself lost, the sensation was altogether  
different. After packing the game, and  
riding away from the place, it was suffi-  
ciently embarrassing. It grew painful as I  
passed on without sighting ought to guide  
me. When, after two hours' wandering, I  
came back to the same place, saw and re-  
cognized the blood-drops, it was appalling.  
Then I had the surety of being lost. Then  
it was I made that speech saving of pro-  
fanity.

Quick followed the questions, "What am  
I to do? Dismount, and remain till morn-  
ing?"

It was now near sunset, about an hour  
or so before sunset; but no sun visible.  
There could be no object in riding further  
that night. Unguided, I might go in the  
wrong direction. On the morrow there  
might be a sun in the sky to point out the  
quarters of the compass.

I had made up my mind to remain, but  
lingered in the saddle, reluctant to alight.  
It seemed like surrendering to despair. Be-  
sides, I was suffering from thirst, as was  
also my horse. Should we make an effort  
to find water?

At that moment, as if answering me, the  
sky assumed a change. Its somber, leaden  
surface became broken into ascending  
clouds, amidst which the sun burst suddenly  
forth—now low down. As the yellow  
light fell athwart the plain, I saw, upon the  
horizon's edge, a dark speck. Apparently  
a clump of arborescent *quercus*—by the  
Mexicans termed *palmillas*. Such trees—  
true denizens of the desert—gave slight  
promise of the presence of water. Still, it  
would be better to sleep under their shade,  
than *sub Jove*. Besides, they were a land-  
mark, and would serve me for a point of  
departure in the morning.

I resolved to ride on to them.  
I had gathered up my reins, and was  
about giving the spur to my tired steed,  
when a voice sounded in my ears, causing  
me to hold hard. It came from behind,  
pronouncing the hail, *Hola!*

My horse answered it with a snort, and  
reared suddenly round. There was a woman  
Upon the plain!

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—for it was in a feminine voice—words can  
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before I had scanned the prairie round.  
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and smooth as a fresh-mown meadow.  
There was nothing on it inside a circle of  
ten miles diameter. And now within less  
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out of the earth? Or dropped from the  
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the sky, interrogating the clouds!"

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lusus naturæ—some vision conjured up by  
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by the *maravilla*. Was it a fresh trick this  
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and sent me to see if you were coming.  
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different from the rest of the speech. As  
she pronounced it she made a sudden stop,  
raising her hand to her forehead, to shade  
her eyes from the sun. With this low  
down, and directly behind me, she could  
but see some one on horseback. And her  
words proved, she had mistaken me for another."

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without saying a word, awaited the result.  
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in the exclaim, "¡Valga me Dios!"  
The tone told of surprise, chagrin, even  
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look."

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"Stay," I said, entreatingly. "It is true  
I am not Ramon, but—"  
"But who?" she asked, again facing  
round, and coming to a firm stand, while a  
gun which she carried was dropped butt  
upon the ground.

"Well, one who will not harm you."  
"Not harm me! Indeed! Ha! ha! ha! That's  
very fine! Ha! ha! Who fears you, sir? Do I  
look like one who can't take care of myself? You  
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half-levelled upon my horse's head.  
But for her laughter I might have felt  
fear. But this, ringing clear and loud, pre-  
cluded all idea of danger.

As she continued to laugh, long after she  
had ceased speaking, I occupied the time  
in taking a survey of her person.  
The figure was that of a woman full  
grown, though not long out of her girlhood.  
In size almost masculine, but only in this.  
In every line it displayed the true feminine  
contour; bust, body, arms and limbs boldly,  
yet gracefully developed. The face was of  
a pronounced beauty, even when the scowl  
was upon it. In laughter it was lit up  
by a serrature of white teeth that showed  
neither speck nor flaw. These formed a  
pleasing contrast to a complexion more  
than sun-browned, further relieved by that  
damask blush on the cheeks which gives  
the picturesque look to damsels of dark hue.

Around the face was a framework of raven  
hair, spreading beyond both shoulders, and  
streaming like a torrent down her back, till  
it almost trailed the ground. Under this

profuse *criniere*, and partially concealed by  
it, was a costume corresponding to its wild-  
ness. Moccasins close fitting the feet; leg-  
gings continued to the knee, there met by a  
skirt fringed and bead-embroidered; above  
a bodice elaborately adorned with stit-  
ching and stained porcupine-quills; the whole  
surmounted by a circlet of painted plumes  
set coquettishly on the head; pearl strings  
on the neck; wampum around the waist;  
with a profusion of bracelets on both arms  
and ankles; in short, the costume of a Co-  
manche belle.

And yet she was evidently not an Indian.  
Half-blood she might be, by her complexion.  
But her speech—in Spanish almost  
pure—with something besides—betrayed  
the training of civilization.

As I gazed upon her face, there came a  
thought into my mind that I had seen it  
before; somewhere, and at some time;  
though where or when I could not imagine.  
It might be but fancy. Certainly I could  
never have encountered her in that guise,  
else I would not have forgotten her. The  
picture was too striking ever to fade from  
my memory.

Still contemplating it in wonder—wonder-  
ing whether it was not all a dream—I  
was again roused to reality by her voice.  
She had ceased to laugh, and once more as-  
suming a stern look, asked:

"Who are you, sir?"

I answered by tossing back the skirt of a  
serape that hung over my shoulders. Feel-  
ing a little chill, after my hot gallop, I had  
put the garment on, so concealing my only  
article of dress that might be called dis-  
tinctive. This was a shell-jacket, the uni-  
form of the corps of which I was captain.  
All my other apparel was Mexican pattern  
and fabric—*calzoneros, calzonzillos, chamarras*,  
boots and spurs—even to the hat upon my  
head, which was a broad-brimmed *sombrero*.  
I wore it because it's the best kind of cos-  
tume for the chase—for travel—for any  
sort of life upon the frontier. My horse,  
too, was caparisoned Mexican fashion. To  
all of which, with the sun in her eyes, was  
due the mistake she had made, in supposing  
me to be "Ramon."

As she looked upon the spread-eagle but-  
ton, an expression passed over her face that  
seemed any thing but favorable to the  
weather. On the contrary, it told of hos-  
tility. I might have expected as much, con-  
sidering the tongue in which she spoke.  
The scene was in the territory of Texas,  
where, after annexation to the United  
States, many Mexicans elected to remain.  
But, though submitting to the new regime,  
they preserved the old hatred in their hearts.

"You are alone?" she asked, glancing  
around the prairie to seek the answer for  
herself.

"I am alone, as you see."  
"And what has brought you here?"  
"This," I said, pointing to the carcass  
on my croup. "I was led hither by the  
chase."

"Well, as you've succeeded in killing  
your game, I advise you to go home with  
it."

"I would, if I could."  
"Why can't you?"

"Because I don't know the way. I am  
lost."

"Yes, I have strayed. But you will be  
good enough to guide me?"  
"Why should I?" she asked, disdain-  
fully.

"Because you are a woman—a beautiful  
woman."

I watched the effect. I soon saw that my  
flattering words were wasted.

"¡Vaya!" she exclaimed, with a haughty  
toss of the head. "Keep your soft speeches  
for those who are silly enough to listen to  
them. I was once a girl, but not now. *¡Ay  
de mí!* 'Twas that brought me to—"

She suddenly interrupted herself, a shadow  
passing over her face. Perhaps some  
bitter remembrance? It appeared for a  
time to soften her; and, thinking the moment  
opportune, I urged:

"You would not have me perish on the  
prairie? You will give me some clue to  
the direction I should take?"

She did not make immediate answer.  
She was apparently pondering on it. I was  
uneasy at her look, which again turned  
unfathomable. I feared a refusal.

I was agreeably surprised, when she said:  
"Si, señor; I will guide you. Follow  
me. *No amos.*"

While speaking she moved off; and I  
set my horse in motion after her.

Suddenly she stopped, fixed her eyes up-  
on the ground, and again appeared to re-  
flect. I heard the word "no." It was low  
muttered, and not addressed to me, but as  
if spoken in soliloquy.

"She has repeated her good intentions.  
A reward, and she will renew them."

With this idea I drew out my watch, and  
passed the guard-chain over my head.

Both were of gold. I detached a locket  
which contained a likeness. Handing her  
the watch and chain, I said:

"Take this as some recompense for the  
service you are about to render me."

"And that?" she asked, pointing to the  
locket, and holding out her hand. In  
greed she would grasp it too!

"I said, entreatingly, 'It is of little value to  
any one save myself. You can have my serape  
—any thing else but this.'"

"¡Cáspita! you mistake me, señor. You  
men can not understand the keenness of a  
woman's curiosity. I but wish to have a  
look at your lady-love; for no doubt she's  
the treasure you so jealously guard. Let  
me judge whether you are a man of taste."

I surrendered the trinket, though not  
without apprehension for its fate.

Tonching the spring, she laid it open,  
and looked inside. She had truly sur-  
mised. The locket contained the likeness  
of her to whom I had given my heart.

As her eye fell upon the picture she gave  
a start, and turning, regarded me with a  
fixed stare, while an expression I could not  
read came over her countenance.

"Is this the likeness of your *novia*, señor  
captain?" she asked.

I nodded an affirmative.

"Do you love her dearly?"  
"As my life."

"And does she reciprocate your affec-  
tion?" she should.

"I hope so."

Again she gazed upon the portrait; then  
placed it to her lips, and kissed it! Her  
stern look was replaced by one tender and  
sad.

What could it mean? Surprise held me  
speechless. Before I had recovered from  
it, she came close up, put the locket into  
my hand, and threw the guard-chain over  
my neck, with the watch still appended!

"Take them back," she said. "Not  
from you, *cavallero*, nothing from you!"

"But you will guide me? I may still  
follow you?"

"Not a foot further. No—not a foot.  
To go with me would be to you certain  
death. Even now you are in danger. You  
must leave me. If seen here your life will  
not be worth a leaf of withered grass. A  
moment more—you have not a moment to  
lose. Go! go!"

"But whither? As I've told you, I am  
lost."

"Turn your eyes toward the setting sun.  
You see some trees yonder—far off on the  
horizon? Make straight for them! Once  
there, you will see other trees beyond; and  
again, beyond them, a hill. Strike for the  
hill—ascend it. From its top you can see  
the settlements. Leave me, *captain*. As  
I've told you, in my company there is dan-  
ger. Ay, there may be death!"

"How can that be? You are alone. I  
can not believe—"

"Ah! you know not. I am not alone.  
There are those near whom you might well  
dread."

"Who?"

"No matter who. Spirits of the prairie,  
and wicked ones. Invisible now, they may  
at any moment appear, and—Go! I be-  
seach you, go!"

"Séniorita, I can not think of leaving  
you. You have been kind. You speak of  
trouble to yourself. Some misfortune has  
befallen you. I command a troop of  
brave men. Can I be of any service?"

"Some other time, perhaps," she said,  
interrupting me; "not now. You must go  
—you must."

Reluctant to part from her without fur-  
ther explanation—disbelieving in the dan-  
ger—mystified—irresolute—I still lingered.

Seeing it, she sprung to the head of my  
horse, grasped the rein, and turned him  
face toward the setting sun.

I noticed that she had a knife in her  
hand, for what purpose I could not divine.

Just then the horse gave a snort, and  
sprung forward; his first bound almost  
starting me from the saddle.

I clutched at the reins, hitherto out of  
my hands, and resting over the saddle-bow.  
I got hold of them and hastily drew back.

They came, but not to tighten along the  
neck of my horse. Instead I held but a  
piece of loose strap. The bridle on both  
sides had been cut!

The horse kept on in wild career, for I  
had now no control of him. With my  
voice I endeavored to stay him, but in  
vain. The animal seemed maddened, as if  
stung by a tarantula.

The pieces of severed bridle were  
dangling down from the bit-rings.  
Stretching forward, I tried to grasp them,  
but could not. I got hold of the headstall,  
however, and with this brought the horse  
to a halt.

Dismounting, I looked back. Great God!  
where was the woman? Since parting from  
her I could not have ridden more than two  
hundred paces. The sun was yet shining  
clear upon the plain. I could see its sur-  
face for miles in every direction. Again I  
was alone upon it!

"Surely it is a dream—all a dream!"

This was my reflection, uttered aloud.  
But while listening to the echo of my own  
voice, I saw that which caused me to say

"No." I held in my hand the proof of  
reality—the broken bridle-rein. And I also  
saw what had startled my horse, forcing  
him into that furious gallop. Blood was  
welling from his side. Between his ribs I  
could perceive a punctured wound. I re-  
membered the knife seen in the hand of the  
girl.

Quickly knotting the severed reins, I  
sprung once more into the saddle, and com-  
menced riding back. As near as I could, I  
headed toward the spot where I had parted  
with the woman. I rode at first in a straight  
line. But soon uncertain, I took to zig-  
zagging, and was at length lost again. My  
brain was becoming wilder, and I began  
to have thoughts of insanity. To escape  
the weird fancies fast thickening around  
me, I once more faced westward—where  
the sun was still visible, as also the clump  
of palmillas.

Heading my horse toward them, I gave  
him the spur in earnest; and in an hour af-  
ter tied my bridle-rein around one of the  
trees.

It was now night; too dark to see the  
other trees of which the woman had warn-  
ed me. So, kindling a fire, I made supper  
on a steak from the pronghorn, and lay  
down to sleep under the shade of the  
palmillas.

Next morning, at sunrise, I descried the  
second corpse, and rode on to it. There I  
saw the hill, and arriving on its summit,  
perceived, to my great gratification, that I  
was upon known ground.

Before midday I reached the canton-  
ment; where I found my brother officers—  
among them my late hunting companions—  
anxious about my safety. They were  
now curious to know the cause of my stay-  
ing so long out, and overwhelmed me with  
inquiries. I was not in the mood to satisfy  
their curiosity. To say the truth, I was  
still under a sort of superstitious scare.

Besides, I feared relating an adventure  
involving so much of the marvelous. It  
might be discredited, and myself made  
mock of.

Soon circumstances arose that drove all  
such thoughts out of my mind, replacing  
them by others more painful.

About an hour after my arrival at the  
fort a party of mounted men made their  
appearance on the parade-ground. They  
were settlers of all classes, armed and  
equipped as for a fight. By their gestures  
it was evident some event had arisen greatly  
to excite them.

It was soon communicated—a calamity  
such as is frequent upon the Texan fron-  
tier. A band of Indians had been making  
maraud upon the settlements, and these  
men were starting in pursuit. They had  
come to claim the assistance of "the sol-  
diers."

Where had the savages shown themselves,  
was the question put to the leader of the  
frontiermen.

"At the hacienda of a Mexican, about  
fifteen miles from the fort."

"The answer gave me anxiety."

"The name?" I asked, in trembling ap-  
prehension.

"Don Lorenzo Zavala. They've stripped  
the place of every thing, murdered Don  
Lorenzo himself, with most of his domestics,  
and carried off his—"

"Oh, God!" I groaned, in agony, without  
waiting the word. I knew it would be  
"daughter."

It was. She whose likeness was in the  
locket borne upon my breast.

I felt cowed, crushed, weak, almost to

fainting. Only for an instant. Then anger  
overmastering, roused me to the energy of  
action.

I stayed for no further details, but at  
once ordered, "Boots and saddles!" to be  
sounded. In ten minutes after we were  
upon the trail of the despoilers.

At first there was a trail, easily taken up.  
Fast we followed it—I with saddened  
heart, and brain half-maddened. My heart  
felt still more sad, my brain madder, when  
the trail became lost—as it at length did.  
It disappeared upon a dry, desert plain,  
where neither hoof of horse nor track of  
man was discernible. It was the prairie on  
which I had late strayed, going in pursuit  
of the pronghorn.

We crossed and quartered it in every di-  
rection; spent two days in exploring its  
pathless wilds; but met neither white man  
nor Indian, saw not a sign of either.

With empty haversacks and hungry  
stomachs—suffering from thirst, too—we  
were compelled to return to the fort.

As I have said, it was the third time the  
savages had attacked this same frontier set-  
tlement, made a successful *coup*, and escaped  
across that accursed prairie. The newspa-  
pers had spoken disparagingly of myself  
and soldiers—alleging that we did not do  
our duty in protecting the citizens. They  
made reference to our fondness for the  
chase; adding that we gave more time to  
the hunting of pronghorns than the pur-  
suing of red-skins.

You may conceive the feelings of my  
brethren in arms, officers as well as men.  
To them it was a chagrin, but to me far  
more. My cup of bitterness had an ingre-  
dient of sorrow, none of them could know.

We had returned to the cantonment only  
to reprovision, give our horses a short rest,  
and again go off. I had no thought of  
giving up the pursuit of the savages till I  
had recovered her, if alive—or, if dead,  
avenged her.

It was night, and I had laid down upon  
my leathern *catee*, if possible to get a snatch  
of sleep. We were to start by early day-  
break. It was now near midnight, and my  
men were all abed, save the sentries—one  
stationed outside the door of my quarters.

I tried to sleep, but could not. Both heart  
and brain were too much excited; the latter  
giving way to weird fancies. Among them  
was that strange apparition of the prairie—  
spirit or woman, whichever it may have  
been. I could not help connecting her with  
the affair now before me; though in what  
way she could be concerned with a maraud  
of red Indians it was difficult to perceive.

True, I had seen her in the Indian garb;  
but, for all that, she was not Indian. Who  
were the "Spirits of the Prairie?" Might  
it not be the very band that had baffled us?  
Ah! might not *Ramon* be the ravisher?

It may seem strange I only thought of  
this after returning disappointed, and that  
I had not gone back to the place where the  
woman had been encountered. The ex-  
planation is, we had trusted to trackers—  
guides of great experience and skill—who  
led us in a different direction.

I had now made up my mind to seek the  
spot where I had seen the prairie apparition,  
and I fancied I could easily find it. The  
hill, the clump of timber, the clump of  
palmillas—these, with the direction of the  
setting sun, would give me guidance. I  
would go that way now.

While astratch on my camp-bedstead,  
thus cogitating, I became aware of a slight  
disturbance outside. It was an exchange  
of speech between the sentry and some one  
who had come up, interrupting him on his  
rounds.

The colloquy was short, only a few  
words; and I could perceive that those  
spoken by the intruder were in a feminine  
voice.

I had no time to give way to wonder.  
Soon the sentry stood in the doorway of  
my chamber. After saluting, he said:

"A woman, captain; wishes to speak  
with you on business of importance—very  
pressin' she says, else I shouldn't."

"Show her into the next room," I said,  
without waiting for the man to finish his  
apologetic speech.

"Springing to my feet, and hastily dress-  
ing, I passed into the apartment that served  
as my sitting-room—where a light was still  
burning. The woman was there, and  
standing just inside the door. She was a  
Mexican, judging by her dress; and, by the  
same token, of the class called *gobiana*. She  
wore the short-skirted *enagua*, with a *rebozo*



lies in one little word—jealousy. Now do you comprehend me?"

"I think I do."

"There's no time for talking. If you don't act at once she will be lost—your sweet heart, and, what is sweeter still—to me—*vengeance!*"

The final word was enunciated with an emphasis that told of intense passion, further actuated by the angry flashing of her eyes. With a gesture of impatience, she added:

"Are you ready to go?"

"I will be, in twenty minutes."

In less time I was in the saddle and out upon the plain, the strange woman by my side, and fifty troopers filing behind us.

It was a moonless night; but there were stars, and these gave us guidance—we were reading them for the direction. We traveled fast, most of the time going in a gallop. This by her advice, which I was but too eager to follow.

"We must get there before morning," she said, "before I am missed. If not, we may be too late."

I understood her meaning, and commanded the "double-quick."

Day was nigh dawning, when we at length came to a halt. But the moon had now arisen, her beams bathing the prairie in soft, silvery light, displaying its surface to our view for miles around. We saw nothing afar, but at our feet something that stayed us. It was a dark line, apparently a cleft in the plain. In depth and width it was not more than an ordinary ditch; but as the eye followed its course it appeared to get deeper and wider.

"Dismount, your soldiers," said the woman, in a whisper. "Let them leave their horses here; they will do better without them."

I did as directed, without a word, except that commanding my men to get afoot. A few took charge of the horses; the rest stood in readiness for what was to follow, whatever this should be.

It was soon made known by the guide dropping down into the dark cleft, where she was almost hidden from our view. The mystery of her former disappearance, as well as appearance—the strange suddenness of both—were now made known to me. We were at the entrance of a *barranca*—one of those singular chasms peculiar to the Mexican table-land, stretching miles across the plains, yawning deep into the earth, unseen, till you stand upon the very edge of their escarpment. They begin in a mere cleft, or *arroyo*, the conduit of rains; growing deeper and wider as they descend toward some cliff-floored stream.

It was into one the woman had dropped, as into a trap on the stage of a theater.

"After me," she said, on descending; "keep close; tread lightly; and don't speak a word to one another. Make the slightest noise, and the Spirits of the Prairie may be roused. If so, then—Hush! come on!"

As she finished speaking her head sunk below the level of the prairie, and I saw she was keeping along the cleft, in the direction toward which it deepened.

Letting myself down, as she had, I commanded my men to do the same.

Soon we got into single file, so descending through a gap that gradually grew deeper, without becoming much wider. Its jaws on each side rose precipitous above our heads, until we saw but a streak of sky dimly discernible by the light of the moon.

For several hundred yards we continued to go down. Then the chasm opened, our path debouched into a ravine of greater width, with a torrent rushing along its bed. Into this we turned, following our guide, who still kept cautioning us to silence.

The ravine soon became a valley, with an open meadow-like expanse, and trees growing around it. On its edge the guide stopped, and pointed to a spot overshadowed by the trees and the precipice rising above them.

"Now, senior capitan," she said, "you see those white things standing close into the cliff? They are tents. In one of them is your sweet lamb, Dona Sacramento Zavalta. She is still safe, though sleeping with wolves around her. I've kept my promise. Go on, and rescue her!"

I needed no urging. I was aware of what the woman meant. On the way she had told me all.

In a few whispered words my followers were prepared for action. With stealth we advanced upon the tents; and were soon around them. Inside we found men—more than a dozen—and in one of them a woman. It was Sacramento: she was saved!

Among the men was "Ramon," the chief of the robber band. For it was a band of robbers—white men and Mexicans—who, in the guise of Indians, had been accustomed to make descent upon the settlements of Texas. It was they who had twice escaped us; and might have done so again, but for the incidents here recorded.

The friendship of a foster-sister saved my Sacramento: for in this relationship stood the "Apprentice of the Prairie." No doubt other motives had to do with it; as she herself admitted, jealousy and revenge. The robber chief was becoming too fond of his captive. Fear alone had hindered him from accomplishing her ruin: fear of the strange woman who led us to their lair.

The drama had its denouement in some wholesale hanging; though my soldiers were not the executioners. We carried the criminals back, and delivered them over to justice. With their crimes already recorded, it was a short shrift for them; and all ended their career upon a scaffold.

As for Sacramento and her foster-sister—their after-history needs not here to be recorded. Enough to know that both still live; that the former is happy, and the latter by no means miserable.

**SPECIAL.**—We will soon make an announcement that will be received with great pleasure by Captain Mayne Reid's vast multitude of admirers.

#### A NEW SERIAL

**MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.**

To commence next week: MRS. BURTON'S beautiful Heart and Home Romance.

#### FLORIEN'S FORTUNE;

**OR,**  
**THE FALSE WIDOW.**

A tale of to-day, the action laid in New York city and vicinity. Deeply absorbing in interest, strong in character and ingenious in plot. It may well be eagerly anticipated.

#### THE PIRATE'S SONG.

BY ARNOLD ISLER.

Above me terrific thunder is crashing,  
About me the scorching lightning is flashing,  
Against me the furious waves are dashing,  
But my spirit is happy and free!  
Storm after storm has madly passed o'er me,  
And the red jaws of hell have opened before me,  
Yet my ship sailed on, as a conqueror bore me,  
O'er the deep blue billowy sea:  
Let thunder crash,  
Let lightning flash,  
Let wild waves dash,  
I heed not the danger,  
To fear I'm a stranger,  
Life's storms can make no change in me!  
I've stood on deck when the bullets were flying,  
While in death my comrades around me were lying,  
Till my ears were deaf with the groans of the dying,  
But my spirit was happy and free!  
I have seen my enemies thickened about me,  
While cutlass and knife swirled round and around me,  
But I came out triumphant, no foe has yet bound me,  
As soon might they bind up the sea!  
Let bullets fly,  
Let comrades lie  
In blood, and die;  
I'll give up, no never!  
Then on ship, forever!  
Life's storms can make no change in me!

#### Iron and Gold:

OR,

#### THE NIGHT-HAWKS OF ST. LOUIS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

AUTHOR OF "FEARING TALLANK," "BLACK CHEROKEE," "HOOVER," "HERCULES, THE HUNCHBACK," "PEARL OF PEARLS," "THE RED SCORPION," ETC.

#### CHAPTER XV.—CONTINUED.

BUT CALVERT MANDOR WAS NOT IN A frame of mind to be wholly disconcerted by the physician's quiet exterior and bland ways. He soon saw through this garb of calmness; and he said, when he caught the other's glittering eyes, and held them to his gaze:

"Always a hypocrite, Theophilus Onnorann, you think to deceive me now. You are hating me more and more—you hated me even when you thought me dead!—you have hated me ever since we played together on the same school-ground, where I was more of a favorite than you."

And Onnorann said, to himself:  
"You are right. This minute I could throttle you where you stand! Now, what is the object of this visit, I wonder?"

As if in answer to the Doctor's mental question, Mandor continued:  
"Theophilus Onnorann, nineteen years ago, it was supposed that I died."

Onnorann nodded.  
"I left a wife and child," pausing again.  
"I believe you did."

"My wife, under the impression that she was a widow, married Wilbur Kearn."

"Yes, she soon forgot you," commented the physician, maliciously.  
Mandor's face colored, but, without remark upon this sharp thrust, he went on:

"I know that my wife married. But, I do not know what became of my child."

"A-h!" exclaimed the other, in a slow tone; and he added, inwardly:  
"Now then, I've got you, friend Mandor. Your soft spot is here," and he eyed his visitor with never keener interest.

"I know that Wilbur Kearn had a child; but, from inquiry made in his neighborhood, yesterday, I learn that he has but one child, that that child is by his wife, and his own. Now, where is my child?"

"Yours—"

"Yes, mine. You have spirited away his—perhaps you can tell me where to look for mine?"

"Spirited away—"

"Ay, I have you. I said it, and it is true. I am convinced that you can tell me what became of Zella Mandor, after my wife married Wilbur Kearn?"

"Oh!" thought the Doctor, scarce able to restrain a chuckle, "here is a little intricacy, between this man from the grave and Kearn. His daughter, eh? He and Kearn must not meet, or the secret will be out. Now, what if he knew that—but, let us see, friend Mandor. Ah! I'll see about it."

"Did you hear what I said?"

"Eh?—oh, yes—I heard. But, you are very much mistaken; I know nothing at all about your Zella."

"You do—"

"Pardon me, friend Mandor, but I do not."

Darker grew the frown on Mandor's brow. Onnorann did not like that frown, and his own brow knit slightly.

Jiggers drew closer to the door.  
"Theophilus Onnorann, I can not account for it, but something here"—tapping his breast—"tells me that you hold the secret of Zella's whereabouts at your tongue's end."

"Do not excite yourself," a cool interruption, with a wave of the hand.

But, Mandor was breathing hard. The physician's manner pricked his patience till calmness was lost. He took a quick step forward and spoke heatedly:

"I have come here to wring the information from your lips—by force, if necessary; and all your hypocrisy will not avail you anything. I am determined; and tell me you *shall*, if these hands have to choke it from you? And if I fail, there is another who may deal more sternly with you."

The eyes in the spectacles closed a little, but the glitter and sparkle beneath the lid was redoubled, and the glance was hard and steady.

Jiggers now laid hold upon the door-knob, and half-turned it. His eagle eyes opened wider, his knees bent some, and while he gaped at them he muttered:

"Now they'll fight—and then I'm off! I'll bet on the Doctor, for he has a grip like a giant. I vow!"

"Besides," added Mandor, flushing more and more, as he warmed to the business in mind, "I made a will, just before that fatal ride on horseback—and it has never come to light, for my estates are idle. I believe you know something of this, too. We'll speak of that presently. But first, my child—Zella—tell me, before I have recourse to sterner means."

"No, we won't speak of that presently!" resolved the physician, in his alert brain. "If I allow you to keep at it, my fine friend, you promise to make it hot as Mercury for me in rather too short a time! You've come on a dangerous errand. You've put your foot in a trap that will snap you, in a minute. Look out now, for I intend to show you something."

He was as slow and calculating in thought as he was in speech.

Then aloud:  
"Friend Mandor, you have always considered me your enemy—"

"You are now—you ever will be. You are still the snake you have been in the past

—you will always be a snake, a serpent of venom, till you die. But, sir, I have you pinned—for you may not leave this room alive, unless you answer my question, and answer truthfully—"

"Easy—easy—the interruption was very oily. I may not be so set an enemy as you think. In short, I shall prove to you that I am a friend—"

"A friend!" with sarcasm.  
"By giving you the information you seek."

"Ha!"—a quick, half-breathless exclamation—"you *do* know!"

"Yes."  
"Then tell me, sir; and make haste—"

"Easy now, I say. It involves a long story."

"I care not for the story—tell me where Zella is."

"You are too impatient. I can not tell you exactly where to find her, but I can relate certain circumstances regarding her, which will put you on the track—and I have no doubt you will soon find her. We are liable to interruption here, though; just step into the next room with me."

He was exceedingly pleasant; his manner was persuasive.

He arose and started toward the door of the room adjoining.

But Mandor was suspicious.  
"You are a shrewd, plotting villain, Theophilus Onnorann, and—"

"That's—that's a hard term—take care!" finishing, however, with an immediate recovery of calmness. "If I were you, friend Mandor, I would not indulge in such free opinions. Remember, please, that you are the beggar in this instance, and—with marked emphasis, though his voice sunk even lower—"if you anger me, I shall tell you nothing, be the consequences what they may. All the remarkable choking you have promised me wouldn't do you any good. Will you come?—I will not speak on the subject unless it be in that room."

Onnorann pointed carelessly toward the apartment, and his manner plainly conveyed:

"Choose for yourself: I care not."

"How do I know but what there is some trick?"

"If it is, we are simply man to man. Do you fear me, physically?"

"Fear you?"—his lip curling—I despise you too greatly to admit of fear."

Onnorann was nettled; he was sorely tempted to throw down the gauntlet and accept the risk; his eyes were full of a serpent fire.

But he had formed a little plot to rid himself of this dangerous corner, and so controlled his impulses, for he foresaw that he would soon triumph.

I carry no weapons, friend Mandor, so you need not fear on that score. If you decline to trust yourself alone with me, so be it—and there it ends."

He made a movement as if to resume his seat.

"Stay: I will go. Lead on."

"Come, then."

Jiggers looked after the two, and exclaimed, *sotto voce*:

"He's a dead man! He'll be on the dissecting-table in half an hour! A bottle of whisky against a doughnut that he never comes out of there!"

And he was not far from being right.

There was but one chair in the apartment to which Onnorann conducted his intended victim. While he remarked it, he said:

"Sit down. I'll get another." He turned to the door, and stepped suddenly into his office.

Jiggers, yielding to his bent of curiosity, was already at the keyhole, and the physician collided with him—sending him sprawling.

"James Jiggers!"

"I'll never do it again, I vow!" spluttered Jiggers, as he hurriedly gathered himself up, and wriggled beyond reach of his employer's clenched fist.

But Onnorann had an object in leaving his visitor alone.

While he spoke sharply to his clerk, he was pressing, with his foot, on a spring just at the surface of the floor-strip across the doorway.

Suddenly there was a sliding, grating sound—a crash—a loud cry; then followed an unearthly silence.

The physician grinned.  
Jiggers rolled his eyes.  
"James Jiggers!"

"Yes, sir," tremblingly, for he felt that something had happened, and he shrank in fear and awe before his employer's strangeness of expression.

"Look!" said Onnorann, in a voice of triumph, as he flung wide the door.

Jiggers stared aghast.

Content Mandor had disappeared; in the center of the room, where the chair stood, was a large, square opening.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

##### TWO LOVES FOR ONE HEART.

"I love thee! Oh, the strife, the pain,  
The fiery thoughts that through me roll!"

"Fond memory whispers of the dreamy past,  
Its hopes and joys, its agony and tears;  
In vain from out his soul he strives to cast  
One shadowy form—the love of early years."

—LAWSON.

NOW MUST WE BLAME HUGH WINFIELD too much for yielding to this new love, when the voice, the person, the glance of Idle Wyn were all in sweetness made to captivate, and used to enslave his heart.

For man is, after all, but a mere subject under the control of two great and distinct powers—altruism and essentially material—animal susceptibility, and intellectual prompting; and the varying predominance of either in opposite proportion is what creates differences in human nature, and produces the inconsistencies, as well as the beauties, of life.

Hugh was not proof against her rare charms; and, besides, he was full of sympathy for her, in her lonely existence.

At the moment he made the warm confession he was sincere, his whole being was absorbed in the new-born passion; his voice was rich with eloquence, his words were quick and eager.

"Hugh Winfield, do you love me?"

The question came very low, the brilliant orbs were fastened to his gaze, her heart beat fast with growing excitement.

"Yes, Idle, I do. I can say no more. My heart is at your feet—will you spurn it?"

"No, Hugh—no, I will not!"

With a quick motion, the dimpled arms entwined his neck, and the lovely face, glowing crimson, turned up to his.

It was the action of a woman who knows no law but the inclination of an intense passion.

"For I love you, Hugh—love you wildly! I have loved you long before we ever came face to face. See: I forget, almost, that I am a woman: it is I who talk of love now. Can you doubt me?"—Hugh!

"Idle! Queen!"

The sweet mouth was close to his; her breath played upon his cheek.

In another moment they were lip to lip, and locked in the first embrace of their mutually-confessed love.

"Hugh, are you sure you know your heart?"

"What do you mean, Idle?"

"Oh! do not tell me that you love me, unless you mean it—"

"Can words say more? Would I hold you in my arms, and see those blushes on your cheeks, if I was not sincere? We have sealed our vows. You are mine."

"Yours, Hugh," she breathed, whisperingly.

An hour, two hours, passed like so many minutes.

In that time the future was arranged for. When he arose, at last, to depart, she accompanied him to the hall.

"Will you come to-morrow, Hugh?"

"Yes."

"At eleven in the morning? We'll ride out together."

"I will come. Good-by, Idle."

Another kiss, an embrace that it would seem they were loth to break, and he left her.

Those beautiful features, with their cheeks of blush and eyes like lustrous diamonds, were twice beautiful, as she watched after him.

When he disappeared down the stairway, she turned back to the room, and an exclamation of joy escaped her.

"Mine!—mine!—mine! He loves me, and has told me so! In a fortnight we shall be married. Oh! is not this a happy hour for me?" and a sweet, glad smile dwelt on the red lips, the bliss of whose kisses Hugh had drunk.

Hugh Winfield passed along the lower entry to the front door. The ever-present servant there bowed him out.

As he hastened in the direction of his home, a new feeling took possession of him. No glad words came from his lips, for conscience was at work, weaving its meshes, now that he was away from the object of his suddenly-conceived affection, beyond the spell of her witchery.

He walked with head hung, and before him slowly arose a vision of Zella Kearn.

Gradually this picture of the brain intensified: he saw himself standing on the little lawn, lingering in the embrace of the pure girl whose deep, deep love he had slighted—slighted, too, when it caused him so much agony of spirit, and when he knew that his heart was wholly hers.

Idle faded from his mind; he yielded to that memory of the past.

It sunk sterner and sterner into his breast; he could see again the sad, hopeless face, that had nestled, with the first pang of despair, against his shoulder—all the misery of that moment was being rethought; and his frame writhed under the influence of a nameless excitement, till it was unbearable.

"This is madness!" he cried, chokingly, as he roused himself with a mighty effort.

"Zella! Zella! I must forget you—forget that I ever saw you! Oh! my brain—how it burns!—how it whirls and pains! I must forget, or thoughts of her—poor, wronged girl!—will drive me crazy!"

"Heli! Hello, here!"

Hugh, wrapt in his uneasy musings, had collided with a party who was hurrying in an opposite direction.

"I beg your pardon, sir; I—"

"Why, Hugh?"

"George!"

It was the very same friend who had advised Hugh Winfield to the course he was at present pursuing.

"What's the matter, old boy?—lost your eyes?"

"I was thinking. I didn't see anybody."

"Where've you been?"

"To see Idle Wyn," after a second's hesitation.

"Have, eh?" smiling. "Then I'll wager a basket of champagne that you're in love with her—no offense, you know. But, tell me, isn't it so?"

"Yes, George, it is—"

"I knew it!"

"But," interrupted Hugh, while he grasped his friend's wrist, and gazed hard and strangely into his face, "let me tell you something that you do not know. I feel as if I was going mad! Do you hear, George?"

"—mad! Do you know what it is for a heart like mine to be in such a state?—we have been brothers, and you should. I am worshipping that pure, true girl, who, only a few short hours ago, laid bare to me the holiest secret of her soul—"

"Who—Zella?"

"Yes—yes; she told me she loved me. Oh, Heaven! the woe of that meeting—"

"I told you you'd better not go near her," put in George, frowning a little.

"I have parted with her, perhaps—and it were better so—forever. I have cast aside the rarest gem of earth—a woman's first and boundless love; and thoughts of her are burning in my brain, till I am giddy with torture! Stop; hear more. This night I have yielded to the fascinations of one very like Zella—oh! so like her; and we are betrothed. Do you hear me, George?—betrothed! Can I ever be happy? What is to be the end of it? Pity me!—pity me! for I feel that death would be preferable to such pain!"

His voice was tremulous with emotion; his speech was husky; the eyes, that stared into the listener's face, were strained and of an unnatural expression; the grip on the other's wrist tightened convulsively.

And this old, tried friend, as he gave ear to the outburst, saw that Hugh was preyed upon beyond endurance by his unhappy condition.

"Try and calm yourself, my dear fellow," he said, gently. "I am very sorry for this—very. Come home with me. Let's have a talk about it. Maybe I can cheer you a little, anyhow, by conversation. You need companionship—"

"No—good-night, George," and, with the hasty words, he wheeled abruptly from the spot.

His friend endeavored to detain him; but Hugh strode on, with compressed lips, striving, with all his manhood, to force back and smother the groan that was rising within him.

"Poor fellow!" uttered George Drake, remaining where they had stood, and looking after the retreating form, "I am very sorry for him. I wish I could make him feel better, but I can't. I once loved, and lost my idol in the grave. My grief was

different from his—but the pain was as keen; and I know that, when the heart is crushed in such a case as this, the voice of one's dearest friend is powerless to cheer. Poor fellow—poor fellow!" and he turned away, sincerely pity



"It is," they answered.  
"Then, there is its price. Take what is yours."  
"What shall we say to Big Dan?" Perry asked.  
"Tell him to come to me to-morrow night."  
She took the hand of each.  
Then they shouldered the chest, and moved toward the door.  
"Farewell, Queen Ruby—we wish you happiness," said Perry, as they paused for a moment; and Neol echoed:  
"Farewell."  
"Perry—Neol—farewell!" waving her hand in adieu.  
She listened to their retreating footsteps, growing fainter and fainter on the stairs—and presently there was a sound of wagon-wheels at the rear of the house.  
Then the lovely head sunk forward, and she murmured lowly:  
"Adieu—the only associates I ever had; robbers, thieves—yet true as steel, and idolizing me, their Queen. Adieu, old life—adieu! you have been full of dangers—but you have brought me my riches, and brought me one whom I love. Queen Ruby is no more—but I live—yes—and then the wife of Hugh! Welcome to the new life—welcome. At last, at last I am happy!"  
(To be continued—Commenced in No. 143.)

## The Rock Rider: THE SPIRIT OF THE SIERRA. A TALE OF THE THREE PARKS.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER.  
AUTHOR OF "THE RED RIFLE," "THE KNIGHT OF THE RUBIES," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER X. A HARD CHASE.

WHEN JACK SOMERS galloped down to the aid of his friend, Frank Buford was hard pressed. The glade in which he had been caught was a perfect blind alley, and his only exit was through the Indians.  
As Jack charged down, his cousin dashed out, and for a few minutes there was a confused melee, pistol bullets flying about in all directions.  
Somers was one of those cool heads who never fired too soon, the great secret of his success in pistol practice, and he made every one of the five shots left in his first revolver tell on a foe in as many seconds, when he got close enough.

The Indians, on the contrary, full of excitement, fired wild, and Frank Buford, his swift thoroughbred bounding here and there in their midst, his saber cutting, slashing, and guarding on every side, added to their confusion.

The whole scene transpired in less than a minute, and then the two cousins, both bleeding from slight wounds, had made their way out of the crowd, and were off at full speed up the valley, twisting and turning from side to side to derange the aim of their antagonists.

Three Indians lay dead on the ground by the pool, and four more were more or less wounded, some seriously.

Red Lightning, not been killed. They saw him rise from the ground and remount his spotted steed, but he could not follow them.

The remainder of the Comanches made but a faint pursuit, and our friends slackened their pace to a canter, while the Indians halted.

"We're well out of that, Jack," quoth Buford, gazing ruefully at his foaming horse. "A little more, and it would have been all day with us. Those fellows fight better than I thought they would."

"Ay, there's no skulk about them," said Somers, proceeding to reload his pistol.

He had only used six of his twenty-four shots so far.

As they looked back they perceived the Indians gathered about Red Lightning, and a single chief was galloping away toward the head of the valley, whence they had all come.

The cousins looked after him, and beheld a sight which made their hearts stand still.

The end of the valley was crowded with Indians, all coming down at an easylope to meet their comrades!

"Frank," said Somers, gravely, "we've made great fools of ourselves. We shall have to do all that we know to escape from this. We must ride for Denver City, and we're lucky if we get there."

"Our horses are fresh," said the Virginian, hopefully. "Those ponies can't come near them in a race. We're safe enough, I guess."

"They can run a smart streak," Somers admitted; "but what are we going to do about Brinkerhoff and Gustave? The redskins will have them sure, if they haven't already."

"Every man for himself, and God for us all," said Buford. "We can't be expected to wait for them. They went off on their own hook, and we must do the same on ours. Come, let's ride faster."

The cousins swept off up the valley toward the north at a free gallop, but the body of Indians in the rear did not quicken their pace. It seemed as if either they had other game in hand or were secure of their prey, for they kept on at the same easylope, and the two cousins rapidly left them behind.

Soon they were hidden from view by a curtain of live-oaks, and Buford beheld their own old camping-tree by the spring, a little to the right.

"Let's go there," he suggested, as they galloped on. "One of them or both may have got back."

They swept past the tree at full gallop, calling out the names of their friends, but no answer was returned.

There was not even the snort or whinny of a horse to greet them.

"Thank heaven! they must have got off safe," said Somers. "Now we can run with a clear conscience."

He had hardly said the words when he heard a joyful distant neigh, and Gustave Belcour's black horse, without saddle or bridle, could be seen trotting proudly round them in a distant circle, his head high in air, like a wild mustang.

"Brinkerhoff has got back, and turned him loose," said Buford. "Where the deuce can Gustave Belcour be?"

He was answered by the clear, sweet notes of a horn from the summit of the Sierra, that seemed to float over the valley, multiplied by the echoes into a concert of delicious melody.

Both instinctively turned round to the east.

There, on the summit of a lofty peak, they could see the airy form of the Spirit of the Sierra, looking down at them.

She waved her long spear, and pointed to the north with a warning gesture, and then waved it forbiddingly, as if to prohibit their further advance.

"By heavens, Jack, this is something very strange!" said Buford, halting. "She seems to say there are enemies ahead."

"We shall soon see, behind those trees," was the answer, the Kentuckian made, as he galloped on to a little island of timber that shut out the view from the pass to Denver.

Buford remained where he was, watching the mysterious girl. He saw her repeat the same warning gestures, and Jack disappeared in the timber ahead, and then she suddenly turned and vanished from the peak like a dream.

How she went he could not see, but a moment after he saw her reappear at the edge of a dark canon, and spring down into its black recesses as fearlessly as a bird.

Then, on a sudden, the boom of a piece of artillery from behind the curtain of trees in front was followed by a distant crackle of musketry, and Jack Somers came galloping back out of the timber, heading for the west, and gesticulating wildly to him to follow.

Buford turned his horse and rejoined his cousin, from whom he received the panting explanation:

"There's a whole tribe of Indians blocking up the road to Denver, and a number of soldiers fighting them. Frank, we'll have to make for Utah. It's the nearest shelter I can see. The whole country seems to be up. Listen to that firing."

Indeed, the racket was becoming fearful as it was, the boom of the guns being incessant, the yells of the Indians louder than ever.

They were answered by the Comanches coming up the valley below, and the sounds served as a guide to the two cousins, who galloped as hard as ever they could toward the west, where a dense forest clothed the foot of the Sierra, and offered them the shelter they craved.

In a few minutes, so great was their speed, they were out of immediate danger, and from the edge of the woods perceived the Comanches bearing down toward the soldiers in the pass, heedless of the two fugitives in the wood.

"So that's what they're after," said Somers, as he looked. "No wonder they were so indifferent to us. I say, Frank, it looks like old times to see that smoke there. How would you like to be into it?"

"I'm just as well pleased where I am," said Buford, dryly. "This soldiering isn't what it's cracked up to be, Jack."

Just at that moment they heard a low ruff at their horses' feet. Looking down, there was little Yakop frisking about, while the grave voice of Carl Brinkerhoff addressed them from a neighboring tree, behind which he had been hidden.

"I say, fellows, dem Indians isn't such fools after all. Dem makes us hunt our holes pretty lively, I guess. You fellows don't go no chance without me and Yakop, so ve sticks together after dis."

Even as he spoke, a tremendous yelling burst forth from the scene of action, and a crowd of mounted Indians broke loose from the rest and came tearing toward them.

In the midst of the crowd the black top of an ambulance could be seen, rocking about as if the horses were coming at a furious pace.

With one accord the three friends turned and dashed into the timber, the yelling growing louder every moment, and the crackle of musketry fiercer than before.

### CHAPTER XI. THE WOLF'S MOUTH.

AT the mouth of one of the upper gorges of the Sierra sat the gaunt frame of the Rock Rider, on his tall mule, when the first echo of the guns boomed upon the morning air.

The Rock Rider turned his head, and his large dark eyes lighted up with the excitement of an old soldier at the sound of artillery.

"A-ha!" he cried, aloud, snuffing the air, "the savage hordes have attacked, and I thought they would, and the sound comes from the Wolf's Mouth. The heathen are coming from far and near, to fatten on the spoil of the white man, and where will this little handful of men be, against the swarms that I saw gathering?"

He sat still for several minutes, musing, when the third and fourth guns boomed out, accompanied by the faint, distant crackle of musketry.

"And those girls," he continued to himself; "must they, too, share the fate of so many others, bright, beautiful, and beloved as they are? Must they, too, be profaned by the accursed touch of the lustful Apache, and the Cheyenne fiend that knows no mercy for age or sex? Not while I can wield a sword, and cast a lance. I will do what I can to save them, and God will help my shortcomings."

He turned his mule, as he spoke, out of the gorge, and rode along the edge of a cliff that overlooked the valley below—a mere ledge along the side of the mountain, not over three feet in breadth. It was one of those peculiar steps or terraces in which the Rocky Mountains abound, one of three grand stages, each separate from the other.

The lower stage was that on which Gustave Belcour was still toiling alone, bewildered by a number of cross-cansons and impassable walls, that seemed to lead him further and further into the nest of mountains, without any hope of ascending higher.

The second was the stage on which the Rock Rider had his home, a separate system of ledges and canons, inaccessible from below, except at one or two points, which might be searched for unsuccessfully for weeks, and which was equally separated from the third or topmost range—the home of the mysterious Spirit of the Sierra.

For the passage to this last range the Rock Rider had often searched, with the patient cunning of insanity, but so far without success. Many a time had he seen the white, graceful figure, himself unseen, and the fancy that she was the embodied Spirit of the Sierra had sunk deep into his mind, cultivated and poetical naturally, and now intensified in its imaginings by the spirit of mania.

As he rode rapidly along the narrow ledge, his sure-footed mule stepping fearlessly, he ever and anon cast his eyes upward, expecting to see her. The poor man seemed to cling to her presence as his sole companion in his loneliness, and hardly felt surprised when he heard the sweet

tones of the mysterious horn echoing among the cliffs.

"Oh, bright Spirit!" exclaimed the Rock Rider, clasping his hands; "I know that thou must be kind, thou art so beautiful! Pity a poor lonely father searching for his lost child, and send her back to me, Spirit; give me my own darling little Evy once more!"

"Boom! Boom! Hum—m—m—Bang!" The sullen echoes of the guns were the only answer to the prayer of the Rock Rider.

The tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks, but he urged on his mule faster, murmuring:

"'Tis just! A gentleman must die in harness if need be, doing his duty. I must do mine, and rescue these poor creatures from the devouring heathen. God may forgive me my sins at last, and restore my little one to me, pure as when she was taken."

He rode rapidly along the edge of the precipice in full view of the valley, the sounds of strife growing plainer as he advanced. Presently turning an angle of the cliff, he came in sight of the exit of Wolf's Mouth Pass, so called from the rows of jagged pinnacles, just like the teeth of a wild beast, that garnished its opening jaws.

There was a great herd of horses, some mounted, others running loose, with crowds of Indians rushing about, while a sparkling of musketry flashed from the crowd along its edge, replied to from the Wolf's Mouth.

There he saw the steady blue lines of soldiers halted and keeping the savages at bay, while the artillerymen were laboring like madmen to bring their pieces to bear correctly, and the covers of several ambulances and wagons were visible crowded together in the rear.

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ged forth from the ambulance, and one of them was immediately struck down. The other two were thrown on the backs of horses, and carried off at full speed. The flutter of robes told the tale only too plainly. The captives were women, and they were in the hands of the most merciless savages on the American continent.

With a deep groan the Rock Rider covered his face. When he looked forth again, the Indians were retiring. The sullen defiant cluster of soldiers were slowly moving back to surround their guns and train once more, leaving their dead on the soil to the mercy of the enemy.

The Rock Rider looked up to the summit of the rocks.

The Spirit of the Sierra had disappeared from view.

Slowly he turned his mule and plunged into the dark gorge, and quiet reigned over the valley once more—the quiet of death.

### CHAPTER XII. THE CROOKED TRAIL.

IN the afternoon of the same day Gustave Belcour, wandering among the mountains, found himself hopelessly lost.

Whichever way he turned, he saw nothing but a nest of peaks towering overhead in all directions, their sides furrowed with black ravines, and no perceptible way for him to get out.

All the morning he had heard the booming of artillery, now in one quarter, now in another, according as the echoes bore it to his ear.

He was seeking for a means of ascent to the higher passes of the Sierra, which thus far seemed to mock his efforts. Everywhere he was confronted by sheer precipices, and the passages between them seemed only to lead him into deeper labyrinths.

At last he came to a steep, still, in a little hollow basin, shut in by rocks on every side, from which there appeared to be no exit.

He was very hungry and tired too.

He had come away without food, and his exercise had been very severe. All the mountain sheep that he had seen had been far out of gun-shot. Leaping fearlessly from rock to rock, they would stop a moment to graze at the toiling man below, and then skip away as if despising him.

Belcour came to a halt, and sat down in the valley to consider.

As he sat down, weariness overcame him, for he had not slept all night, and the tired youth fell asleep, his gun under his head.

When he awoke, the valley was rapidly growing dark, the sun having sloped downward many degrees. He heard light foot steps near him, pattering over the rocks, and remained perfectly still to watch.

Presently the graceful form and great curving horns of a mountain sheep, or big-horn—called by the Indians *abata*—came into view not far from his feet. The animal was advancing timidly, as if lost in wonder at the novel sight of a human being lying there.

Belcour slowly turned his head, and the animal started back.

Remaining perfectly still, he saw it gradually recover its confidence, and come forward toward the pool, where it stooped its graceful head and drank, watching him narrowly all the time.

Visions of roast venison floated through the hunter's mind, as he saw the creature so close to him, but they were doomed to disappointment in this instance, for as he suddenly sprang to pick up his rifle, the *abata* gave a tremendous bound, and darted across the valley into a corner, where two walls of precipice seemed to meet.

Straight up this corner the creature bounded like a cat climbing a tree, and Belcour forbore to fire, for he was already too late.

But the intruder had done him a service better than food. He had showed him the way out of the glen.

Without waiting, for he knew it would soon be sunset, Gustave ran to the corner where the big-horn had ascended, and beheld a way indeed, but such a perilous one that he hesitated to try it.

"Never mind, Gustave; courage, my lad," he said to himself. "If you don't go out this way, you stand a chance of starving to death in the mountains. So here goes."

He was a high-born man, and he knew the light increasing as he rose higher, for the sun was not yet set, and the higher he went the more he saw of it.

By a lucky chance he seemed to have arrived in the second stage of the Sierra, where he could continue on the middle level for a long time, without meeting any obstacles.

The ledge led to a plateau of rock, over which a stream of water, a few inches deep, had spread itself out, after issuing from a dark canon beyond, and fell into the valley over a precipice to his left.

Up this natural path he went, muttering: "I've a high-born man go I can follow."

And follow he did, with great daring, the light increasing as he rose higher, for the sun was not yet set, and the higher he went the more he saw of it.

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The ledge led to a plateau of rock, over which a stream of water, a few inches deep, had spread itself out, after issuing from a dark canon beyond, and fell into the valley over a precipice to his left.

Up this natural path he went, muttering: "I've a high-born man go I can follow."

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examined them carefully, and beheld the unmistakable footprints of a mule. He remembered at once the gaunt figure he and the rest had seen the evening before, and came to the conclusion that it must be the same who had made these tracks.

Who it was remained to be found out, and the idea of a connection between the strange man and the Spirit of the Sierra for the first time occurred to him.

Musing on the presence of human beings in such unlooked-for places, he ascended the path, and stood by the waterfall, when the sun was suddenly darkened by a black shadow of strange and uncouth form that was projected from below.

Belcour looked down.

The sun was setting, and across the middle of his disk stood out the black, grotesque figure of the Rock Rider, coming up the gorge toward him, at a swinging trot.

The young man drew back from the edge of the rock, and awaited the other's appearance with some curiosity, for he had never seen such a being before.

To be prepared against a possible enemy, he threw his rifle into the hollow of his left arm, ready to be pointed at a moment's notice, and quietly waited the other's approach.

In a few moments more the clatter of hoofs was audible on the ledge, and the Rock Rider made his appearance, coming up like a goblin in the crimson glow of sunset.

The instant that he saw Gustave he wheeled his mule round like a flash, the left side toward the Frenchman, and covered him with the long lance, saying, in deep, hollow tones:

"Down with your arms! I am the Rock Rider."

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 145.)

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# BELLE MARIE.

A Legend of the Hudson's Bay Company.

BY LAUNCE PONTZ.

Francois Ledoux was a hunter bold,  
Who trapped for the company,  
And roamed in the snow-draped woods so cold,  
When winter had cast its fleecy fold  
O'er the bending forest young and old,  
And icicles gemmed each tree.

The summer saw him in every dance  
At the rendezvous so free;  
And of love Francois had many a chance,  
Yet all would have given for one kind glance  
That shone, with the gleam of sunny France,  
From the eyes of Belle Marie.

Belle Marie was a maiden bright  
As ever the world did see;  
Such a damsel deserved a man of might;  
So the company's hunters thought 'twas right  
That every summer should see a fight  
For the sake of Belle Marie.

Marigny shot down Louis Rand,  
The king of the trappers free;  
And Baptiste Rand he buried his knife  
In Marigny's heart; and the deadly strife  
Went on, that the bravest might win for wife,  
The peerless Belle Marie.

But Francois Ledoux he kept apart  
From strife and rivalry;  
He knew that the road to a maiden's heart  
Lies far away from the bully's part;  
So with soft, low words and a lover's art,  
He wooed Belle Marie.

And, as ever before since the world began,  
And the hearts of girls were free,  
The love of the maiden quickly ran  
To the handsome youth, as it only can,  
When love and courage unite in man,  
And both bend low the knee.

So it came to pass, on a certain day,  
Francois held Marie's hand;  
'Twas the end of the summer time so gay;  
The morrow must see him far away;  
But the lovers still made a lingering stay,  
When by came Baptiste Rand.

Baptiste, the bully of all the crowd,  
Now chief of the trappers free;  
He gave one glance, and a lowering cloud  
Covered his face, with wrinkles plowed,  
He muttered a curse, and over loud,  
As he scowled at Belle Marie.

And away to the woods with trap and gun  
Francois sped cheerily,  
For the silver fox and the mink-fur dune,  
To furnish a nest for the summer's sun,  
A nest for the bird his love had won,  
His own loved Belle Marie.

The springtime came, and the rendezvous  
Was full of the trappers free;  
Again came Baptiste Rand and Roux,  
Both loaded with mink and sable too;  
And the only one Francois Ledoux  
Was missed by Belle Marie.

For nevermore in the company's land  
Did man or woman see  
The favorite youth of all the band,  
Who met, when he won Belle Marie's hand,  
The jealousy fierce of Baptiste Rand,  
The chief of the trappers free.

And Baptiste swaggered and boasted high,  
When he in his cups would be;  
My bullet is straight and swift to fly,  
And never a man has shot as I;  
The snowdrift covers a crimson dye,  
But I'll have Belle Marie.

But flowers and Marie together fade,  
No Francois came to see;  
And the winter's snows on bonches they shade  
A grave that the gray old sexton made,  
As he covered from sight, with pick and spade,  
The last of Belle Marie.

And ever after on Baptiste's track  
Two shadowy forms would be;  
And in dreams again he'd hear the crack  
Of that cowardly shot at Francois' back,  
Till, haggard and torn by conscience-rack,  
He died in agony.

## The Enamel Locket.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

A TINY oval locket it was, just the color  
Of Bessie Lorraine's eyes; its sides and  
hinges were of gold; and on one half was  
Bessie's monogram; on the other, Al Forrester's,  
in frosted gold. An exquisite little  
charm it was, for Bessie's watch-chain, that  
had been a gift from Al Forrester only six  
months ago, when Bessie was so happy, and  
she and Al had such good talks about the future.

Now, sitting by the bay window that  
opened upon the ocean, where she could see  
the waves rolling and tossing house-high, as  
the wild, shrieking tempest tore madly over  
the white waters, Bessie Lorraine was feeling,  
to the full, what a miserable blank her  
life had been of late; what a failure the  
rest of it seemed likely to be; and all because  
of that hot-headed quarrel with Al Forrester.

They had both been to blame; they both  
were quick, both proud; and so, for nothing  
in the world but the want of one kind  
word, Bessie and Al had coldly parted.  
'Forever,' they had both said, but neither  
thought it would be forever, or even six  
months, as the days had grown to be, now.

Where was he now, she wondered? whether  
in Japan, Europe, or under the roof of  
the hotel where she sat, she had not the  
slightest idea. Was he loyal, while miserable,  
as was she? or had a new pretty face  
won him from remembrances of her?

Then, as the possibility—ay, the extreme  
probability of the thing, for Bessie knew  
the proneness of men to such faithlessness,  
occurred to her, there came over her one of  
those little flashes of temper that had helped  
to make the breach between her and Al  
Forrester; and, very impulsively, she dashed  
aside the contents of her lap—a ruffe and  
she was mending; her spool of thread, scissors,  
and her blue enamel locket.

And the gift she had so cherished fell to  
the floor, shattered and ruined; and just  
across the picture of Al's bright, handsome  
face was a wide crack.

A pang of sharp regret shot through her;  
she felt the tears rushing to her eyes, and  
she only succeeded in forcing them back  
when there came a quick rap at her door,  
instantly followed by the entrance of a lady  
and her little daughter.

"Don't get up, Bessie. I declare I have  
the blues so horribly, that nothing but a  
call on you will dissipate them. Lillie,  
don't touch Miss Bessie's sewing—pick up  
the cotton, dear, for her."

Mrs. Helmbold had a quick, pleasant  
voice, and an air of such perfect friendliness  
about her, that no one could resist her,  
and Bessie could not help smiling back in  
the cheery face.

"I am glad you ran in, Mrs. Helmbold.  
I believe I was beginning to feel a little  
homesick, myself. What a dreary day it is!"

"Very—ah! Lillie, now you have found  
something to amuse you. Bessie, I suppose  
she can have that old broken locket to  
play with?"

"Oh—certainly—that is—" and while  
Bessie was wondering how to refuse Mrs.  
Helmbold, Lillie had run out of the room,  
doubtless to display her toy to some  
less fortunate child.

Bessie listened to Mrs. Helmbold's gay,  
chattering gossip; she watched the waves  
running in, high and fierce in their foamed  
grandeur; she thought of every thing else  
but the conversation, and yet she

managed to say yes or no sufficiently to keep  
Mrs. Helmbold entertained an hour or more.  
Then she dressed for dinner.

He was a fine-looking man, with a sparkle  
of proud strength in his black eyes, and an  
expression of firm decision around his mouth  
that might have been a partial cause of  
his quarrel with Bessie Lorraine.

His luggage had been carried to his room,  
and he was sitting on the piazza, his feet on  
the balcony, smoking and thinking:

"Well, here he was at Watch Hill, after  
all the scores of times he had thought he  
never would come. He had come on Bessie  
Lorraine's account exclusively; he had missed  
her so much these few months; he wanted  
to see her more than he ever thought  
he would want to see anybody. He had  
heard her say, months ago, that she and  
her parents were to spend the last weeks of  
summer at Watch Hill; and here was he  
at Watch Hill, actually in search of her.

Was she here, he wondered? If she was,  
was that confounded Captain Danton in her  
train, as of yore? for Captain Danton was  
the man he and Bessie had quarreled about.  
And that very minute, a tall, handsome  
man, in naval uniform, came up to him  
with a jovial welcome.

"Forrester! old fellow, I am as delighted  
as surprised. Where the mischief have  
you kept yourself so long?"

Of course Al had to shake hands, though  
quite frigidly, but Danton would not observe it.

"We're a jolly party, Forrester, here at  
Watch Hill. There's Lubin and his wife,  
and Gus Helmbold and his family, and the  
Loraines—bless my soul if Bessie won't be  
astonished."

A tinge of red surged to Al's bronze  
cheeks.

"Doubtless Miss Bessie will be highly delighted.  
Shall I refresh your memory a little,  
Captain Danton?"

"No need, thank you! I plainly remember  
what a confounded fool you made  
of yourself, Al—Now, don't fire up; I'm

per, quietly, but with a peculiar look in his  
eye that warned the other not to carry the  
joke too far.

The man did not reply, and Rube, contenting  
himself with the exclamation, "Ee dum'd blatherskite!" resumed the work of  
cleaning his six-shooter.

"I reckon most uv yur fellers," said  
Grady, "an' awar uv the fact that afore the  
Red River gang, as they were called—robbers,  
yur know—war teetotally extarnated,  
they give the people in the settlements  
as well as Uncle Sam's sojers a mighty  
lot uv trouble one way 'n' another, an'  
menay a good man went under while the  
Gov'ment war cleanin' 'em out.

"Well, in the fall of '53, me an' Jim Curtis  
chanced to drop in at Fort Washita, an'  
thar we found things in a purty lively state  
for a one-hoss post.

"Word hed been fetched in thet Kern  
Handly an' his gang hed been to work, an'  
arter doin' a power uv devilment, they hed  
made tracks fur the'r holes, somewhar up  
the Antelope hills, jess crackly whar, nobody  
didn't know.

"Kurnel Tyler war in command at thet  
time, an' es soon es he heard thet me an'  
Jim war in, he sent fur us to know if we'd  
take the skunk's trail an' find out whar he  
hoded.

"Thet very night Jim war taken down  
bad w' the shakes, most uv the sojers hed  
'em, so I hed to make thet trip by myself.

"Go it alone, ole hoss," sez Jim. "You've  
got a good hand, an' the kurnel 'll do far  
by yur."

"I didn't like to leave Jim, fur yur all  
knows what he ar, but thar warn't no help-  
in' it, an' at daybreak I started.

"I got the runnagades' trail at a ranch as  
they hed burnt down, an' follered it close  
ontil I sighted the hills on the evenin' uv  
the third day out.

"The night afore I hed crept up to  
hearin' distance uv whar the cusses war in  
camp, an' on countin' heads, I diskivered  
thet thar war jess thirty uv 'em, an' a ugly-  
lookin' set they wur, too.

"I knowed it war purty nigh all the  
gang, three or four mebbey hev'in been left  
in camp to look arter things.

"They war talkin' over the devilment  
they'd been up to, an' how much they'd  
made by thet trip an' the like, an' I tell  
yur, boyees, it made my blood bile to listen

blushes of sweet satisfaction as she went  
down to dinner—and to happiness forever  
after.

Then came an abrupt, cruel sealing of  
the fountain of her sweet hopes; then there  
came suddenly a blinding blow, for Al For-  
rester had gone an hour or more before!

And Bessie Lorraine never saw him again  
until years and years afterward, when she  
was the happy wife of Captain Danton,  
and could look back without a regret to  
the misery of several months of her life,  
and smile at the memory of the little ro-  
mance of her blue enamel locket.

## RINGWOOD'S

### Camp-Fire Yarns.

#### "How Bill Grady Walked into the Trap."

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"Look at Rube, Billee," said one of the  
rangers, addressing Bill Grady, as we  
gathered about the fire, having unsaddled  
and picketed for the night. "Look at his  
handsom' phizahogamy. Don't look es ef  
he war in a humor to tell us thet yarn. Do  
'ee?"

"Shet y'r cussed head!" snapped old  
Rube.

"Let up onto him, Lance; he ar' mad  
yit about the tumble his old razor-back  
stump-sucker give him this mornin'."

"Thet brute!" ejaculated Rube.  
"Well, boyees, es Rube hyar ain't a-goin'  
to open, I don't mind tellin' yur uv a lettle  
sarcumstance what happened to this hoss  
one'd down in the Red River kentry."

"I votes as Rube shan't be 'lowed to hear  
thar yarn," said a ranger, with a wink at  
the rest.

"How'r yur gwine to purvent Rube from  
hearin' uv Bill's yarn?" asked the old trap-



BELLE MARIE.

the best friend you've got in this affair, if  
you'll only let me be."

Captain Danton coolly recrossed his legs,  
and then made Al accept a cigar from his  
case.

"Now, Forrester—all you've got to do is  
to make it up, and my word for it, Bessie  
'll—Hello! what on earth's this?"

For a pile of Swiss ruffles, blue sash and  
brown curls suddenly appeared at his feet,  
and then followed a fat little pair of arms,  
and a red, breathless face, as Lillie Helmbold  
picked herself up.

"I—I—fallded down—and—I've—lost  
it!"

Al picked up and was about to hand to  
her something that had fallen at his feet,  
when he suddenly uttered a little cry.

"Is this it, sis? Where did you get it?"  
Lillie made a dive for it, and grasped it.  
"Miss Bessie gave it to me, for fair,"  
and away she danced, her blue locket in  
her chubby hand, never knowing then, or  
ever, what a fate was in it all.

Al turned a white face and lurid eyes to  
Captain Danton.

"Pooh, wasn't I, to think for a moment  
she remembered me? That little incident  
has settled it at last; I don't propose to be  
thrown one side again, like my unfortunate  
gift."

He walked away, followed by Danton's  
eyes that were shining roguishly.

"It shall not separate them, if I can help  
it. I'll see what I can do with Bessie."

She stood before her mirror, her eager  
eyes noting the effect of every adornment  
she fastened on; her hands were trembling  
with a nervous delight, for Al Forrester  
was under the roof, and she was to meet  
him at the dinner-table.

Bessie had fully resolved to go bravely  
to him and ask him to forgive her for her  
share of the wrong; and, since she had re-  
solved, a sweet peace had stolen over her,  
so grateful to experience after the turbu-  
lent unrest of so many weary weeks.

She wanted to appear very beautiful to  
him; and so she selected a dress of purest  
white, and wore green ribbons at her  
throat, in her bright brown hair, and  
around her shapely waist.

She knew she looked exceedingly well;  
and she was proud of her beauty for Al  
Forrester's sake; and for his sake came the

while they laughed an' went on over mur-  
derin' white people like theselves, an'  
burnin' houses over ther wimmen's and  
children's heads. Yur bet it did.

"Es they nighed the hills, an' the kentry  
begin gettin' more an' more open, I hed to  
be mighty cautious like.

"They war on the look-out fur anybody  
follerin', an' kept a couple uv the gang be-  
hind a spyin', an' these two put me up to  
all I knowed in the way uv dodgin' an'  
huntin' kiver.

"When we struck the mount'ins 'twurn't  
so bad, an' I hung clost' on ther trail till  
they crossed a gully, went through a lefty  
place uv timber, an' entered a narrier can-  
yon thet cut into one uv ther biggest  
hills.

"Then I knowed I hed bagged ther  
game, fur ten years afore I war in thet very  
gully, an' knowed it war a pocket, thet ar,  
thet it run on'y a lettle ways an' then stoped  
short off at a bu'stin' big cliff.

"Thar warn't no way o' gettin' outen  
ther place 'cept by the way they got in.  
'I war purty well beat out by ther tramp  
—I war afool, yur know—so I detarnined  
on hev'in' a good snooze for the balance t'v  
the night, an' knowin' uv a cave clost' by,  
I made fur it, an' found it jess whar it war  
when I seen it last.

"Twur a bully place fur a feller to lay  
by in. The mouth war entirely hid by a  
lot uv brush an' vines in front, an' ther trail  
thet led up to it war over solid rocks, whar  
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"Into it I crawled, an' feelin' around fur  
a soft place, I stretched out fur a nap.  
'I war afool, yur know—so I detarnined  
on hev'in' a good snooze for the balance t'v  
the night, an' knowin' uv a cave clost' by,  
I made fur it, an' found it jess whar it war  
when I seen it last.

"Twur a bully place fur a feller to lay  
by in. The mouth war entirely hid by a  
lot uv brush an' vines in front, an' ther trail  
thet led up to it war over solid rocks, whar  
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hed mounted an' war closin' on me at ev'ry  
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